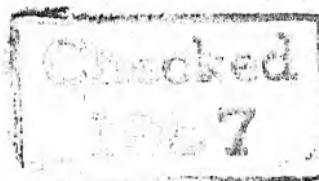


**SELECTIONS FROM
MODERN POETS**



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SECOND SELECTIONS FROM
MODERN POETS

(New Edition (10th) Reset)

THIRD SELECTIONS FROM
MODERN POETS

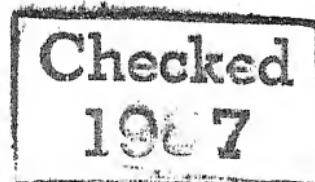
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SELECTIONS FROM MODERN POETS MADE BY SIR JOHN SQUIRE

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NEW EDITION (RESET)



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THIS BOOK IS PRODUCED IN
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PREFATORY NOTE

No Poet represented in this book was over fifty when, in 1919, I began to compile it. The eldest of them all was born in 1870.

Many good and some great living poets are therefore missing from its pages. Nothing is here by Mr Hardy or Mr Bridges, by Mr A. E. Housman, Mr Yeats, *Æ*, Mr Binyon, Mr Hewlett, Mr Herbert Trench, Mr Gosse, Mr Austin Dobson, Mr Doughty, Mr Kipling, Sir Henry Newbolt, Mrs Meynell, Mrs Woods, Mr Wilfrid Blunt, and others whose names must appear in any comprehensive anthology from living poets. The date, 1870, was arbitrarily chosen : so would any other date have been. But some date I had to fix, for my object was to illustrate what many of us think an exceptional recent flowering.

I do not propose to analyse the tendencies, in idea and in method, exhibited in the poems here collected. These things are always better seen at a distance ; and anyhow the materials are here for the production of an analysis by the reader himself, if he is eager for one. But I will express one opinion, and call attention to one phenomenon. The opinion is that the majority of the poems in this book have merit and that many more could have been printed without lowering the standard. And the phenomenon is the simultaneous appearance—the result of underlying currents of thought and feeling—of a very large number of poets who write only or mainly in lyrical forms. Several living poets of the highest repute have won their reputation solely on short poems, and there are, and have been, a very large number indeed who have written one or two good poems.

The better production of our generation has been mainly lyrical and it has been widely diffused. Where is the ambitious work on a large scale ? Where is the twentieth-century poet who is fulfilling the usual func-

P R E F A T O R Y N O T E

tions of the greatest poets ; to display human life in all its range and variety, or to exercise a clear and powerful influence on the thought of mankind with regard to the main problems of our existence ? These questions are asked ; possibly Echo may give its traditional and ironic answer.

There are several observations, however, which should be made. One is that the great doctrinal poets have not always become widely recognised as such in their own prime, their general vogue being posthumous. Another is that we cannot possibly tell what a poet now living and young may or may not do before he dies. But though I have my own views on this subject I do not think that the age, even if admitted to be purely lyrical, stands in need of defence. It is of no use asking a poetical renascence to conform to type, for there isn't any type. There are marked differences in the features of all those English poetical movements which have chiefly contributed to the body of our "immortal" poetry. In the Elizabethan age we had the greatest diversity of production : a multitude of great and small men, with much genius, or but a spark of it blown to life by the favourable wind, produced works in every form and on every scale. The age of Herbert and Vaughan, of Crashaw, Herrick, Marvell, Carew, Suckling, Lovelace, Corbet, Habington, is memorable almost solely for its lyrical work. The era of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Shelley, and Keats was an age during which a vast amount of great poetry was written by a few great poets ; there was very little healthy undergrowth. Should our literary age be remembered by posterity solely as an age during which fifty men had written lyrics of some durability for their truth and beauty. it would not be remembered with contempt. It is in that conviction that I have compiled this anthology.

It is irritating to feel that even within its own limits it does not appear to myself—not to mention others—as good or as nearly representative as it might have been. Permission could not be obtained to print Mr Masefield's *Biography* and his *August 1914*, which I personally happen to prefer to any of his shorter works. Since the time in 1919–20 when I was compiling the book two volumes have come out from which I should like to have

P R E F A T O R Y N O T E

made large selections : Edmund Blunden's *The Waggoner* and the late Wilfrid Owen's *Poems*. Each of these poets is inadequately represented here ; and a few things by others, who do not appear here at all, came to my notice when it was too late to put them in.

I have to thank the living poets from whose works I have drawn for permitting me to use everything I wanted. I am grateful to Mrs Brooke and Rupert Brooke's literary executor, Mr Edward Marsh (whose "Georgian" collections have been a great stimulus and help to me) for permission to use a selection from Brooke ; to Mrs J. E. Flecker for poems by her husband ; to Lady Desborough for the poems by her son, Julian Grenfell ; to Lord Dunsany for the poems by Francis Ledwidge ; to Mrs Thomas Macdonagh and Mrs Joseph Plunkett for the poems by their husbands ; to Mrs Owen for her son Wilfrid Owen's *Strange Meeting* ; to Professor W. R. Sorley for the poems by his son, Charles Sorley ; to Lady Glenconner for those by her son, Edward Wyndham Tennant ; to Mrs Edward Thomas for the poems (published too late for him ever to know how people would admire them) by Edward Thomas.

Finally, almost every publisher in the kingdom has assisted the book with permission to reprint copyright poems. The full list of publishers and works is as follows : Messrs Bell (Edward L. Davison, *Poems*) ; Blackwell (E. Wyndham Tennant, *Worple Flit*) ; Burns, Oates and Washbourne (G. K. Chesterton, *Poems*) ; Cambridge University Press (C. H. Sorley, *Marlborough and other Poems*) ; Chatto and Windus (Robert Nichols, *Ardours and Endurances*, *Aurelia*, Wilfred Owen, *Poems*) ; Collins (F. Brett Young, *Poems*) ; Constable (Gordon Bottomley, *Annual of New Poetry*, 1917, W. de la Mare, *Collected Poems*) ; Dent (G. K. Chesterton, *The Wild Knight*) ; Duckworth (H. Belloc, *Poems*, D. H. Lawrence, *Love Poems*, Sturge Moore, *Collected Poems*) ; Fifield (W. H. Davies, *Collected Poems*) ; Heffer (A. Y. Campbell, *Poems*) ; Heinemann (Robert Graves, *Fairies and Fusiliers*, John Masefield, *Lollingdon Downs*, Siegfried Sassoon, *The Old Huntsman*, *Counter-Attack*, *War Poems*) ; Herbert Jenkins (Francis Ledwidge, *Poems*) ; Lane (Lascelles Abercrombie, *Emblems of Love*) ; Macmillan (Ralph Hodgson, *Poems*, James Stephens, *Songs from*

P R E F A T O R Y N O T E

the Clay) ; Elkin Mathews (Gordon Bottomley, *Chambers of Imagery*, James Joyce, *Chamber Music*, Sturge Moore, *The Vinedresser*) ; Maunsel and Roberts (Padraic Colum, *Poems*, Seumas O'Sullivan, *The Twilight People*, Joseph Plunkett, *Poems*) ; Methuen (G. K. Chesterton, *The Ballad of the White Horse*, *The Flying Inn*, W. H. Davies, *The Bird of Paradise*, I. A. Williams, *Poems*) ; Palmer (Francis Burrows, *The Green Knight*) ; Poetry Bookshop (Frances Cornford, *Poems*, Harold Monro, *Children of Love*, *Strange Meetings*) ; Secker (Martin Armstrong, *The Buzzards*, Maurice Baring, *Poems 1914-1919*, J. E. Flecker, *Collected Poems*, Robert Graves, *Country Sentiment*, Edward Shanks, *The Queen of China*) ; Selwyn and Blount (Robin Flower, *Hymenaea*, John Freeman, *Poems New and Old*, Edward Thomas, *Collected Poems*) ; Sidgwick & Jackson (Edmund Blunden, *The Waggoner*, Rupert Brooke, *Collected Poems*, John Drinkwater, *Olton Pools*, *Tides*, R. C. K. Ensor, *Odes*, Ivor Gurney, *Severn and Somme*, R. Macaulay, *The Two Blind Countries*, W. J. Turner, *The Hunter*, *The Dark Fire*) ; Talbot Press and Fisher Unwin (T. Macdonagh, *Poems*).

J. C. SQUIRE.

LASCELLES ABERCROMBIE
MARRIAGE SONG

I

COME up, dear chosen morning, come,
Blessing the air with light.
And bid the sky repent of being dark :
Let all the spaces round the world be white,
And give the earth her green again.
Into new hours of beautiful delight,
Out of the shadow where she has lain,
Bring the earth awake for glee,
Shining with dews as fresh and clear
As my beloved's voice upon the air.
For now, O morning chosen of all days, on thee
A wondrous duty lies :
There was an evening that did loveliness foretell ;
Thence upon thee, O chosen morn, it fell
To fashion into perfect destiny
The radiant prophecy.
For in an evening of young moon, that went
Filling the moist air with a rosy fire,
I and my beloved knew our love ;
And knew that thou, O morning, wouldest arise
To give us knowledge of achieved desire.
For, standing stricken with astonishment,
Half terrified in the delight,
Even as the moon did into clear air move

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

And made a golden light,
Lo there, croucht up against it, a dark hill,
A monstrous back of earth, a spine
Of hunched rock, furred with great growth of
pine,
Lay like a beast, snout in its paws, asleep ;
Yet in its sleeping seemed it miserable,
As though strong fear must always keep
Hold of its heart, and drive its blood in dream.
Yea, for to our new love, did it not seem,
That dark and quiet length of hill,
The sleeping grief of the world ?—Out of it we
Had like imaginations stept to be
Beauty and golden wonder ; and for the lovely
fear
Of coming perfect joy, had changed
The terror that dreamt there !
And now the golden moon had turned
To shining white, white as our souls that burned
With vision of our prophecy assured :
Suddenly white was the moon ; but she
At once did on a woven modesty
Of cloud, and soon went in obscured :
And we were dark, and vanish't that strange hill.
But yet it was not long before
There opened in the sky a narrow door,
Made with pearl lintel and pearl sill ;
And the earth's night seem'd pressing there,—
All as a beggar on some festival would peer,—
To gaze into a room of light beyond,
The hidden silver splendour of the moon.
Yea, and we also, we

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

Long gazed wistfully
Towards thee, O morning, come at last,
And towards the light that thou wilt pour upon
us soon !

II

O soul who still art strange to sense,
Who often against beauty wouldest complain,
Doubting between joy and pain :
If like the startling touch of something keen
Against thee, it hath been
To follow from an upland height
The swift sun hunting rain
Across the April meadows of a plain,
Until the fields would flash into the air
Their joyous green, like emeralds alight ;
Or when in the blue of night's mid-noon
The burning naked moon
Draws to a brink of cloudy weather near,
A breadth of snow, firm and soft as a wing,
Stretcht out over a wind that gently goes,—
Through the white sleep of snowy cloud there
grows
An azure-border'd shining ring,
The gleaming dream of the approaching joy of
her ;—
What now wilt thou do, Soul ? What now,
If with such things as these troubled thou wert ?
How wilt thou now endure, or how
Not now be strangely hurt ?—
When utter beauty must come closer to thee

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

Than even anger or fear could be ;
When thou, like metal in a kiln, must lie
Seized by beauty's mightily able flame ;
Enjoyed by beauty as by the ruthless glee
Of an unescapable power ;
Obeying beauty as air obeys a cry ;
Yea, one thing made of beauty and thee,
As steel and a white heat are made the same !
—Ah, but I know how this infirmity
Will fail and be not, no, not memory,
When I begin the marvellous hour.
This only is my heart's strain'd eagerness,
Long waiting for its bliss.—
But from those other fears, from those
That keep to Love so close,
From fears that are the shadow of delight,
Hide me, O joys ; make them unknown to-night !

III

Thou bright God that in dream camest to me last
night,
Thou with the flesh made of a golden light,
Knew I not thee, thee and thy heart,
Knew I not well, God, who thou wert ?
Yea, and my soul divinely understood
The light that was beneath thee a ground,
The golden light that cover'd thee round,
Turning my sleep to a fiery morn,
Was as a heavenly oath there sworn
Promising me an immortal good :

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

Well I knew thee, God of Marriages, thee and thy
flame !

Ah, but wherefore beside thee came
That fearful sight of another mood ?
Why in thy light, to thy hand chained,
Towards me its bondage terribly strained,
Why came with thee that dreadful hound,
The wild hound Fear, black, ravenous, and
gaunt ?

Why him with thee should thy dear light sur-
round ?

Why broughtest thou that beast to haunt
The blissful footsteps of my golden dream ?—
All shadowy black the body dread,
All frenzied fire the head,—
The hunger of its mouth a hollow crimson flame,
The hatred in its eyes a blaze
Fierce and green, stabbing the ruddy glaze,
And sharp white jetting fire the teeth snarl'd at
me,
And white the dribbling rage of froth,—
A throat that gaped to bay and paws working
violently,

Yet soundless all as a winging moth ;
Tugging towards me, famishing for my heart ;—
Even while thou, O golden god, wert still
Looking the beautiful kindness of thy will
Into my soul, even then must I be,
With thy bright promise looking at me,
Then bitterly of that hound afraid ?—
Darkness, I know, attendeth bright,
And light comes not but shadow comes :

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

And heart must know, if it know thy light,
Thy wild hound Fear, the shadow of love's
delight.

Yea, is it thus ? Are we so made
Of death and darkness, that even thou,
O golden god of the joys of love,
Thy mind to us canst only prove,
The glorious devices of thy mind,
By so revealing how thy journeying here
Through this mortality, doth closely bind
Thy brightness to the shadow of dreadful Fear ?—
Ah no, it shall not be ! Thy joyous light
Shall hide me from the hunger of fear to-night.

IV

For wonderfully to live I now begin :
So that the darkness which accompanies
Our being here, is fasten'd up within
The power of light that holdeth me ;
And from these shining chains, to see
My joy with bold misliking eyes,
The shrouded figure will not dare arise.
For henceforth, from to-night,
I am wholly gone into the bright
Safety of the beauty of love :
Not only all my waking vigours plied
Under the searching glory of love,
But knowing myself with love all satisfied
Even when my life is hidden in sleep ;
As high clouds, to themselves that keep

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

The moon's white company, are all possest
Silverly with the presence of their guest ;
Or as a darken'd room
That hath within it roses, whence the air
And quietness are taken everywhere
Deliciously by sweet perfume.

EPILOGUE

WHAT shall we do for Love these days ?
How shall we make an altar-blaze
To smite the horny eyes of men
With the renown of our Heaven,
And to the unbelievers prove
Our service to our dear god, Love ?
What torches shall we lift above
The crowd that pushes through the mire,
To amaze the dark heads with strange fire ?
I should think I were much to blame,
If never I held some fragrant flame
Above the noises of the world,
And openly 'mid men's hurrying stares,
Worshipt before the sacred fears
That are like the flashing curtains furl'd
Across the presence of our lord Love.
Nay, would that I could fill the gaze
Of the whole earth with some great praise
Made in a marvel for men's eyes,
Some tower of glittering masonries,
Therein such a spirit flourishing
Men should see what my heart can sing :

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

All that Love hath done to me
Built into stone, a visible glee ;
Marble carried to gleaming height
As moved aloft by inward delight ;
Not as with toil of chisels hewn,
But seeming poised in a mighty tune.
For of all those who have been known
To lodge with our kind host, the sun,
I envy one for just one thing :
In Cordova of the Moors
There dwelt a passion-minded King,
Who set great bands of marble-hewers
To fashion his heart's thanksgiving
In a tall palace, shapen so
All the wondering world might know
The joy he had of his Moorish lass.
His love, that brighter and larger was
Than the starry places, into firm stone
He sent, as if the stone were glass
Fired and into beauty blown.

Solemn and invented gravely
In its bulk the fabric stood,
Even as Love, that trusteth bravely
In its own exceeding good
To be better than the waste
Of time's devices ; grandly spaced,
Seriously the fabric stood.
But over it all a pleasure went
Of carven delicate ornament,
Wreathing up like ravishment,
Mentioning in sculptures twined
The blitheness Love hath in his mind ;

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

And like delighted senses were
The windows, and the columns there
Made the following sight to ache
As the heart that did them make.
Well I can see that shining song
Flowering there, the upward throng
Of porches, pillars and windowed walls.
Spires like piercing panpipe calls,
Up to the roof's snow-cloud flight ;
All glancing in the Spanish light
White as water of arctic tides,
Save an amber dazzle on sunny sides.
You had said, the radiant sheen
Of that palace might have been
A young god's fantasy, ere he came
His serious worlds and suns to frame ;
Such an immortal passion
Quiver'd among the slim hewn stone.
And in the nights it seemed a jar
Cut in the substance of a star,
Wherein a wine, that will be poured
Some time for feasting Heaven, was stored.
But within this fretted shell,
The wonder of Love made visible,
The King a private gentle mood
There placed, of pleasant quietude.
For right amidst there was a court.
Where always muskèd silences
Listened to water and to trees ;
And herbage of all fragrant sort,—
Lavender, lad's-love, rosemary,
Basil, tansy, centaury,—

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

Was the grass of that orchard, hid
Love's amazements all amid.
Jarring the air with rumour cool,
Small fountains played into a pool
With sound as soft as the barley's hiss
When its beard just sprouting is ;
Whence a young stream, that trod on moss,
Prettily rimpled the court across.
And in the pool's clear idleness,
Moving like dreams through happiness,
Shoals of small bright fishes were ;
In and out weed-thickets bent
Perch and carp, and sauntering went
With mounching jaws and eyes a-stare ;
Or on a lotus leaf would crawl,
A brinded loach to bask and sprawl,
Tasting the warm sun ere it dipt
Into the water ; but quick as fear
Back his shining brown head slipt
To crouch on the gravel of his lair,
Where the cooled sunbeams broke in wrack,
Spilt shatter'd gold about his back.

So within that green-veiled air,
Within that white-walled quiet, where
Innocent water thought aloud,—
Childish prattle that must make
The wise sunlight with laughter shake
On the leafage overbowed,—
Often the King and his love-lass
Let the delicious hours pass.
All the outer world could see
Graved and sawn amazingly

L A S C E L L E S A B E R C R O M B I E

Their love's delighted riotise,
Fixt in marble for all men's eyes ;
But only these twain could abide
In the cool peace that withinside
Thrilling desire and passion dwelt ;
They only knew the still meaning spelt
By Love's flaming script, which is
God's word written in ecstasies.

And where is now that palace gone,
All the magical skill'd stone,
All the dreaming towers wrought
By Love as if no more than thought
The unresisting marble was ?
How could such a wonder pass ?
Ah, it was but built in vain
Against the stupid horns of Rome,
That pusht down into the common loam
The loveliness that shone in Spain.
But we have raised it up again !
A loftier palace, fairer far,
Is ours, and one that fears no war.
Safe in marvellous walls we are ;
Wondering sense like builded fires,
High amazement of desires,
Delight and certainty of love,
Closing around, roofing above
Our unapproacht and perfect hour
Within the splendours of love's power.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

THE BUZZARDS

WHEN evening came and the warm glow grew deeper,

And every tree that bordered the green meadows

And in the yellow cornfields every reaper
And every corn-shock stood above their shadows
Flung eastward from their feet in longer measure,
Serenely far there swam in the sunny height
A buzzard and his mate who took their pleasure
Swirling and poising idly in golden light.

On great pied motionless moth-wings borne along,
So effortless and so strong,

Cutting each other's paths together they glided,
Then wheeled asunder till they soared divided
Two valleys' width (as though it were delight
To part like this, being sure they could unite
So swiftly in their empty, free dominion),
Curved headlong downward, towered up the sunny steep,

Then, with a sudden lift of the one great pinion,
Swung proudly to a curve, and from its height
Took half a mile of sunlight in one long sweep.

And we, so small on the swift immense hillside,
Stood tranced, until our souls arose uplifted

M A R T I N A R M S T R O N G

On those far-sweeping, wide,
Strong curves of flight—swayed up and hugely
drifted,
Were washed, made strong and beautiful in the
tide
Of sun-bathed air. But far beneath, beholding
Through shining deeps of air, the fields were
golden
And rosy burned the heather where cornfields
ended.

And still these buzzards whirled, while light
withdrew
Out of the vales and to surging slopes ascended,
Till the loftiest flaming summit died to blue.

MAURICE BARING

DIFFUGERE NIVES, 1917

To J. C. S.

THE snows have fled, the hail, the lashing rain,
Before the Spring.

The grass is starred with buttercups again,
The blackbirds sing.

Now spreads the month that feast of lovely things
We loved of old.

Once more the swallow glides with darkling wings
Against the gold.

Now the brown bees about the peach trees boom
Upon the walls ;

And far away beyond the orchard's bloom
The cuckoo calls.

The season holds a festival of light
For you, for me ;

But shadows are abroad, there falls a blight
On each green tree.

And every leaf unfolding, every flower
Brings bitter meed ;

Beauty of the morning and the evening hour
Quickens our need.

M A U R I C E B A R I N G

All is reborn, but never any Spring
Can bring back this ;
Nor any fullness of midsummer bring
The voice we miss.

The smiling eyes shall smile on us no more ;
The laughter clear,
Too far away on the forbidden shore,
We shall not hear.

Bereft of these until the day we die,
We both must dwell ;
Alone, alone, and haunted by the cry ;
“ Hail and farewell ! ”

Yet when the scythe of Death shall near us hiss,
Through the cold air,
Then on the shuddering marge of the abyss
They will be there.

They will be there to lift us from sheer space
And empty night ;
And we shall turn and see them face to face
In the new light.

So shall we pay the unabated price
Of their release,
And found on our consenting sacrifice
Their lasting peace.

MAURICE BARING

The hopes that fall like leaves before the wind,
The baffling waste,
And every earthly joy that leaves behind
A mortal taste.

The uncompleted end of all things dear,
The clanging door
Of Death, forever loud with the last fear,
Haunt them no more.

Without them the awakening world is dark
With dust and mire ;
Yet as they went they flung to us a spark,
A thread of fire.

To guide us while beneath the sombre skies
Faltering we tread,
Until for us like morning stars shall rise
The deathless dead.

JULIAN GRENFELL

BECAUSE of you we will be glad and gay,
Remembering you, we will be brave and strong ;
And hail the advent of each dangerous day,
And meet the last adventure with a song.
And, as you proudly gave your jewelled gift,
We'll give our lesser offering with a smile,
Nor falter on that path where, all too swift,
You led the way and leapt the golden stile.

MAURICE BARING

Whether new paths, new heights to climb you find,
Or gallop through the unfooted asphodel,
We know you know we shall not lag behind,
Nor halt to waste a moment on a fear ;
And you will speed us onward with a cheer,
And wave beyond the stars that all is well.

PIERRE

I SAW you starting for another war,
The emblem of adventure and of youth,
So that men trembled, saying : " He forsooth
Has gone, has gone, and shall return no more." "
And then out there, they told me you were dead,
Taken and killed ; how was it that I knew,
Whatever else was true, that was not true ?
And then I saw you pale upon your bed.

Scarcely a year ago, when you were sent
Back from the margin of the dim abyss ;
For Death had sealed you with a warning kiss.
And let you go to meet a nobler fate :
To serve in fellowship, O fortunate :
To die in battle with your regiment.

HILAIRE BELLOC

THE SOUTH COUNTRY

WHEN I am living in the Midlands
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening :
 My work is left behind ;
And the great hills of the South Country
 Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
 They stand along the sea ;
And it's there walking in the high woods
 That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
 Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
 I saw them for a day :
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
 Their skies are fast and grey ;
From their castle-walls a man may see
 The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
 They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
 Light aspen leaves along,
They have the secret of the Rocks,
 And the oldest kind of song.

HILAIRE BELLOC

But the men that live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise,
They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our Sister the Spring
When over the sea she flies ;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
She blesses us with surprise.

I never get between the pines
But I smell the Sussex air ;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there,
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
Nor a broken thing mend :
And I fear I shall be all alone
When I get towards the end.
Who will there be to comfort me
Or who will be my friend ?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
Of the men of the Sussex Weald,
They watch the stars from silent folds,
They stiffly plough the field,
By them and the God of the South Country
My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
Or if ever I grow to be old,

HILAIRE BELLOC

I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood
Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

THE NIGHT

Most holy Night, that still dost keep
The keys of all the doors of sleep,
To me when my tired eyelids close
Give thou repose.

And let the far lament of them
That chant the dead day's requiem
Make in my ears, who wakeful lie,
Soft lullaby.

Let them that know the horned moon
By my bedside their memories croon.
So shall I have new dreams and blest
In my brief rest.

Fold your great wings about my face,
Hide dawning from my resting-place,
And cheat me with your false delight,
Most Holy Night.

HILAIRE BELLOC

SONG

INVITING THE INFUENCE OF A YOUNG
LADY UPON THE OPENING YEAR

I

You wear the morning like your dress
And all with mastery crowned ;
When as you walk your loveliness
Goes shining all around.
Upon your secret, smiling way
Such new contents were found,
The Dancing Loves made holiday
On that delightful ground.

II

Then summon April forth, and send
Commandment through the flowers ;
About our woods your grace extend
A queen of careless hours.
For oh, not Vera veiled in vain,
Nor Dian's sacred Ring,
With all her royal nymphs in train
Could so lead on the Spring.

THE FALSE HEART

I SAID to Heart, " How goes it ? "

Heart replied :

" Right as a Ribstone Pippin ! "

But it lied.

HILAIRE BELLOC

HANNAKER MILL (1913)

SALLY is gone that was so kindly ;
Sally is gone from Hannaker Hill,
And the briar grows ever since then so blindly ;
And ever since then the clapper is still . . .
And the sweeps have fallen from Hannaker
Mill.

Hannaker Hill is in desolation ;
Ruin a-top and a field unploughed.
And Spirits that call on a falling nation,
Spirits that loved her calling aloud,
Spirits abroad in a windy cloud.

Spirits that call and no one answers—
Hannaker's down and England's done.
Wind and thistle for pipe and dancers,
And never a ploughman under the sun :
Never a ploughman, never a one.

TARANTELLA

Do you remember an Inn,
Miranda ?
Do you remember an Inn ?
And the tedding and the spreading
Of the straw for a bedding,

HILAIRE BELLOC

And the fleas that tease in the High Pyrenees,
And the wine that tasted of the tar ?
And the cheers and the jeers of the young mule-teers

(Under the dark of the vine verandah) ?

Do you remember an Inn, Miranda,
Do you remember an Inn ?

And the cheers and the jeers of the young mule-teers

Who hadn't got a penny,
And who weren't paying any,
And the hammer at the doors and the Din ?
And the Hip ! Hop ! Hap !

Of the clap

Of the hands to the twirl and the swirl
Of the girl gone chancing,

Glancing,

Dancing,

Backing and advancing,
Snapping of the clapper to the spin
Out and in—

And the Ting, Tong, Tang of the guitar !

Do you remember an Inn,
Miranda ?

Do you remember an Inn ?

Never more

Miranda,

Never more.

Only the high peaks hoar :

And Aragon a torrent at the door.

HILAIRE BELLOC

No sound
In the walls of the Halls where falls
The tread
Of the feet of the dead to the ground.
No sound :
Only the boom
Of the far Waterfall like Doom.

ON A DEAD HOSTESS

Of this bad world the loveliest and the best
Has smiled, and said good-night, and gone
rest.

EDMUND BLUNDE

ALMSWOMEN

At Quincey's moat the squandering village
ends,

And there in the almshouse dwell the dearest
friends

Of all the village, two old dames that cling
As close as any true loves in the spring.

Long, long ago they passed three-score-and-ten,
And in this doll's house lived together then ;
All things they have in common being so poor,
And their one fear, Death's shadow at the door.
Each sundown makes them mournful, each sun-
rise

Brings back the brightness in their failing eyes.

How happy go the rich fair-weather days
When on the roadside folk stare in amaze
At such a honeycomb of fruit and flowers
As mellows round their threshold ; what long
hours

They gloat upon their steeping hollyhocks,
Bee's balsams, feathery southernwood and stocks,
Fiery dragons'-mouths, great mallow leaves
For salves, and lemon plants in bushy sheaves,
Shagged Esau's Hands with five green finger
tips !

Such old sweet names are ever on their lips.

E D M U N D B L U N D E N

As pleased as little children where these grow
In cobbled pattens and worn gowns they go,
Proud of their wisdom when on gooseberry
 shoots

They stuck egg-shells to fright from coming
 fruits

The brisk-billed rascals ; waiting still to see
Their neighbour owls saunter from tree to tree
Or in the hushing half-light mouse the lane
Long-winged and lordly.

But when those hours wane
Indoors they ponder, scared by the harsh storm
Whose pelting saracens on the window swarm,
And listen for the mail to clatter past
And church clock's deep bay withering on the
 blast ;

They feed the fire that flings a freakish light
On pictured kings and queens grotesquely
 bright,

Platters and pitchers, faded calendars,
And graceful hour-glass trim with lavenders.

Many a time they kiss and cry, and pray
Both may be summoned in the self-same day,
And wiseman linnet tinkling in his cage
End too with them the friendship of old age,
And all together leave their treasured room
Some bell-like evening when the May's in bloom.

GLEANING

ALONG the baulk the grasses drenched in dews
Soak through the morning gleaners' clumsy
shoes,

And cloying cobwebs trammel their brown
cheeks

While from the shouldering sun the dewfog
reeks.

Then soon begun, on ground where yesterday
The rakers' warning-sheaf forbade their way,
Hard clucking dames in great white hoods make
haste

To cram their lap-bags with the barley waste,
Scrambling as if a thousand were but one,
Careless of stabbing thistles. Now the sun
Gulps up the dew and dries the stubs, and
scores

Of tiny people trundle out of doors
Among the stiff stalks, where the scratched hands
ply,

Red ants and blackamoors and such as fly ;
Tunbellied, too, with legs a finger long,
The spider harvestman ; the churlish, strong
Black scorpion, prickled earwig, and that mite
Who shuts up like a leaden shot in fright
And lies for dead. And still before the rout
The young rats and the field mice whisk about
And from the trod whisp out the leveret darts
Bawled at by boys that pass with blundering
carts

EDMUND BLUNDE

Top-heavy to the red-tiled barns. And still
The children feed their cornsacks with goodwill,
And farm wives ever faster stoop and flounce.
The hawk drops down at plummet's speed to
pounce

The nibbling mouse or resting lark away,
The lost mole tries to pierce the mattocked clay
In agony and terror of the sun.

The dinner hour and its grudged leisure won,
All sit below the pollards on the dykes,
Rasped with the twinge of creeping barley spikes :
Sweet beyond telling now the small beer goes
From the hooped hardwood bottles, the wasp
knows,
And even hornets whizz from the eaten ash—
Then crusts are dropt and switches snatched to
slash,
While, safe in shadow of the apron thrown
Aside the bush which years before was grown
To snap the poacher's nets, the baby sleeps.
Now toil returns, in red-hot fluttering light,
And far afield the weary rabble creeps,
Oft clutching blind wheat black among the white,
That smutches where it touches quick as soot—
Oft gaping where the landrail seems afoot,
Who with such magic throws his baffling speech,
Far off he sounds when scarce beyond arm's
reach.

Mongrels are left to mind the morning's gain,
But squinting knaves can slouch to steal the
grain ;

EDMUND BLUNDEN

Now close the farm the fields are gleaned agen,
Where the boy droves the turkey and white hen
To pick the shelled sweet corn ; their hue and cry
Answers the gleaners' gabble, and sows trudge by
With little pigs to play and rootle there
And all the fields are full of din and blare.

So steals the time past, so they glean and gloat ;
The hobby-horses whir, the moth's dust coat
Blends with the stubble, scarlet soldiers fly
In airy pleasure ; but the gleaners' eye
See little but their spoil, or robin flower
Ever on tenterhooks to shun the shower,
Their weather-prophet never known astray ;
When he folds up, then toward the hedge glean
they.

But now the dragon of the sky droops, pales,
And wandering in the wet grey western vales,
Stumbles, and passes, and the gleaning's done.
The farmer, with fat hares slung on his gun,
Gives folk goodnight as down the ruts they pull
The creaking two-wheeled hand carts bursting
full,
And whimpering children cease their teasing
squalls,
While left alone the supping partridge calls—
Till all at home is stacked from mischief's way
To thrash and dress the first wild, windy day,
And each good wife crowns weariness with pride,
With such small riches more than satisfied.

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

THE PLOUGHMAN

UNDER the long fell's stony eaves
The ploughman, going up and down,
Ridge after ridge man's tide-mark leaves,
And turns the hard grey soil to brown.

Striding, he measures out the earth
In lines of life, to rain and sun ;
And every year that comes to birth
Sees him still striding on and on.

The seasons change, and then return ;
Yet still, in blind, unsparing ways,
However I may shrink or yearn,
The ploughman measures out my days.

His acre brought forth roots last year ;
This year it bears the gloomy grain ;
Next Spring shall seedling grass appear ;
Then roots and corn and grass again.

Five times the young corn's pallid green
I have seen spread and change and thrill ;
Five times the reapers I have seen
Go creeping up the far-off hill :

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

And, as the unknowing ploughman climbs
Slowly and inveterately,
I wonder long how many times
The corn will spring again for me.

BABEL : THE GATE OF THE GOD

Lost towers impend, copeless primeval props
Of the new threatening sky, and first rude digits
Of awe remonstrance and uneasy power
Thrust out by man when speech sank back in his
throat :

Then had the last rocks ended bubbling up
And rhythms of change within the heart begun
By a blind need that would make Springs and
Winters ;

Pylons and monoliths went on by ages,
Mycenæ and Great Zimbabwe came about ;
Cowed hearts in This conceived a pyramid
That leaned to hold itself upright, a thing
Foredoomed to limits, death and an easy apex ;
Then postulants for the stars' previous wisdom
Standing on Carthage must get nearer still ;
While in Chaldea an altitude of God
Being mooted, and a Saurian unearthed
Upon a mountain stirring a surmise
Of floods and alterations of the sea,
A round-walled tower must rise upon Senaar
Temple and escape to God the ascertained.
These are decayed like Time's teeth in his mouth,

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

Black cavities and gaps, yet earth is darkened
By their deep-sunken and unfounded shadows
And memories of man's earliest theme of towers.

Space—the old source of time—should be undone,
Eternity defined, by men who trusted
Another tier would equal them with God.
A city of grimed brick-kilns, squat truncations,
Hunched like spread toads yet high beneath their
circles

Of low packed smoke, assemblages of thunder
That glowed upon their under sides by night
And lit like storm small shadowless workmen's
toil.

Meaningless stumps, unturned bare roots, re-
mained

In fields of mashy mud and trampled leaves,
While, if a horse died hauling, plasterers
Knelt on a plank to clip its sweaty coat. . . .
A builder leans across the last wide courses ;
His unadjustable unreaching eyes
Fail under him before his glances sink
On the clouds' upper layers of sooty curls
Where some long lightening goes like swallows
downward,

But at the wider gallery next below
Recognize master masons with pricked parch-
ments :

That builder then, as one who condescends
Unto the sea and all that is beneath him,
His hairy breast on the wet mortar calls
“ How many fathoms is it yet to heaven ! ”

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

On the next eminence the orgulous King
Nimroud stands up conceiving he shall live
To conquer God, now that he knows where God is :
His eager hands push up the tower in thought . . .
Again, his shaggy inhuman height strides down
Among the carpenters because he has seen
One shape an eagle-woman on a door-post :
He drives his spear-beam through him for wasted
day.

Little men, hurrying running here and there,
Within the dark and stifling walls, dissent
From every sound, and shoulder empty hods :
“ The God’s great altar should stand in the crypt
Among our earth’s foundations ”—“ The God’s
great altar
Must be the last far coping of our work ”—
“ It should inaugurate the broad main stair ”—
“ Or end it ”—“ It must stand toward the
East ! ”
But here a grave contemptuous youth cries out,
“ Womanish babblers, how can we build God’s
altar
Ere we divine its foreordained true shape ? ”
Then one “ It is a pedestal for deeds ”—
“ ‘Tis more and should be hewn like the King’s
brow ”—
“ It has the nature of a woman’s bosom ”—
“ The tortoise, first created, signifies it ”—
“ A blind and rudimentary navel shows
The source of worship better than horned
moons ”

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

Then a lean giant " Is not a calyx needful ? "—
" Because round grapes on statues well expressed
Become the nadir of incense, nodal lamps,
Yet apes have hands that cut and carved red
crystals"—

" Birds molten, touchly talc veins bronze buds
crumble

Ablid ublai ghan isz rad eighar ghaurl . . . "

Words said too often seemed such ancient
sounds

That men forget them or were lost in them ;
The guttural glottis-chasms of language reached
A rhythm, a gasp, were curves of immortal
thought.

Man with his bricks was building, building
yet,

Where dawn and midnight mingled and woke no
birds,

In the last courses, building past his knowledge
A wall that swung—for towers can have no
tops,

No chord can mete the universal segment,
Earth has no basis. Yet the yielding sky,
Invincible vacancy, was there discovered—
Though piled-up bricks should pulp the sappy
balks,

Weight generate a secrecy of heat,
Cankerous charring, crevices' fronds of flame.

THE END OF THE WORLD

THE snow had fallen many nights and days ;
The sky was come upon the earth at last,
Sifting thinly down as endlessly
As though within the system of blind planets
Something had been forgot or overdriven.
The dawn now seemed neglected in the grey
Where mountains were unbuilt and shadowless
trees

Rootlessly paused or hung upon the air.
There was no wind, but now and then a sigh
Crossed that dry falling dust and rifted it
Through crevices of slate and door and casement.
Perhaps the new moon's time was even past.
Outside, the first white twilights were too void
Until a sheep called once, as to a lamb,
And tenderness crept everywhere from it ;
But now the flock must have strayed far away.
The lights across the valley must be veiled,
The smoke lost in the greyness or the dusk.
For more than three days now the snow had
thatched
That cow-house roof where it had ever melted
With yellow stains from the beasts' breath inside ;
But yet a dog howled there, though not quite
lately.

Someone passed down the valley swift and sing-
ing,
Yes, with locks spreaded like a son of morning ;
But if he seemed too tall to be a man

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

It was that men had been so long unseen,
Or shapes loom larger through a moving snow.
And he was gone and food had not been given
him.

When snow slid from an overweighted leaf
Shaking the tree, it might have been a bird
Slipping in sleep or shelter, whirring wings ;
Yet never bird fell out, save once a dead one—
And in two days the snow had covered it.
The dog had howled again—or thus it seemed
Until a lean fox passed and cried no more.
All was so safe indoors where life went on
Glad of the close enfolding snow—O glad
To be so safe and secret at its heart,
Watching the strangeness of familiar things.
They knew not what dim hours went on, went
by,
For while they slept the clock stopt newly wound
As the cold hardened. Once they watched the
road,
Thinking to be remembered. Once they doubted
If they had kept the sequence of the days,
Because they heard not any sound of bells,
A butterfly, that hid until the Spring
Under a ceiling's shadow, dropt, was dead.
The coldness seemed more nigh, the coldness
deepened
As a sound deepens into silences ;
It was of earth and came not by the air ;
The earth was cooling and drew down the sky.
The air was crumbling. There was no more sky.
Rails of a broken bed charred in the grate,

G O R D O N B O T T O M L E Y

And when he touched the bars he thought the
sting
Came from their heat—he could not feel such
cold . . .
She said “ O do not sleep,
Heart, heart of mine, keep near me. No, no ;
sleep.
I will not lift his fallen, quiet eyelids,
Although I know he would awaken then—
He closed them thus but now of his own will.
He can stay with me while I do not lift them.”

ATLANTIS

WHAT poets sang in Atlantis ? Who can tell
The epics of Atlantis or their names ?
The sea hath its own murmurs, and sounds not
The secrets of its silences beneath,
And knows not any cadences enfolded
When the last bubbles of Atlantis broke
Among the quieting of its heaving floor.

O, years and tides and leagues and all their
billows
Can alter not man’s knowledge of men’s hearts—
While trees and rocks and clouds include our
being
We know the epics of Atlantis still :
A hero gave himself to lesser men,
Who first misunderstood and murdered him,

GORDON BOTTOMLEY

And then misunderstood and worshipped him ;
A woman was lovely and men fought for her,
Towns burnt for her, and men put men in
bondage,
But she put lengthier bondage on them all ;
A wanderer toiled among all the isles
That fleck this turning star or shifting sea,
Or lonely purgatories of the mind,
In longing for his home or his lost love.

Poetry is founded on the hearts of men :
Though in Nirvana or the Heavenly courts
The principle of beauty shall persist,
Its body of poetry, as the body of man,
Is but a terrene form, a terrene use,
That swifter being will not loiter with ;
And, when mankind is dead and the world cold,
Poetry's immortality will pass.

NEW YEAR'S EVE, 1913

O, CARTMEL bells ring soft to-night,
And Cartmel bells ring clear
But I lie far away to-night,
Listening with my dear ;

Listening in a frosty land
Where all the bells are still
And the small-windowed bell-towers stand
Dark under heath and hill.

G O R D O N B O T T O M L E Y

I thought that, with each dying year,
As long as life should last
The bells of Cartmel I should hear
Ring out an agèd past :

The plunging, mingling sounds increase
Darkness's depth and height,
The hollow valley gains more peace
And ancientness to-night :

The loveliness, the fruitfulness,
The power of life lived there
Return, revive, more closely press
Upon that midnight air.

But many deaths have place in men
Before they come to die ;
Joys must be used and spent, and then
Abandoned and passed by.

Earth is not ours ; no cherished space
Can hold us from life's flow,
That bears us thither and thence by ways
We knew not we should go.

O, Cartmel bells ring loud, ring clear,
Through midnight deep and hoar,
A year new-born, and I shall hear
The Cartmel bells no more.

G O R D O N B O T T O M L E Y

TO IRON-FOUNDERS AND OTHERS

WHEN you destroy a blade of grass
 You poison England at her roots :
Remember no man's foot can pass
 Where evermore no green life shoots.

You force the birds to wing too high
 Where your unnatural vapours creep :
Surely the living rocks shall die
 When birds no rightful distance keep.

You have brought down the firmament
 And yet no heaven is more near ;
You shape huge deeds without event,
 And half made men believe and fear.

Your worship is your furnaces,
 Which, like old idols, lost obscenes,
Have molten bowels ; your vision is
 Machines for making more machines.

O, you are buried in the night,
 Preparing destinies of rust ;
Iron misused must turn to blight
 And dwindle to a tattered crust.

The grass, forerunner of life, has gone,
 But plants that spring in ruins and shards
Attend until your dream is done :
 I have seen hemlock in your yards.

G O R D O N B O T T O M L E Y

The generations of the worm
 Know not your loads piled on their soil ;
Their knotted ganglions shall wax firm
 Till your strong flagstones heave and toil.

When the old hollowed earth is cracked,
 And when, to grasp more power and feasts,
Its ores are emptied, wasted, lacked,
 The middens of your burning beasts

Shall be raked over till they yield
 Last priceless slags for fashionings high,
Ploughs to make grass in every field,
 Chisels men's hands to magnify.

R U P E R T B R O O K E

SONNET

OH ! Death will find me, long before I tire
 Of watching you ; and swing me suddenly
Into the shade and loneliness and mire
 Of the last land ! There, waiting patiently,

One day, I think, I'll feel a cool wind blowing,
 See a slow light across the Stygian tide,
And hear the Dead about me stir, unknowing,
 And tremble. And *I* shall know that you have
died.

And watch you, a broad-browed and smiling dream,
 Pass, light as ever, through the lightless host,
Quietly ponder, start, and sway, and gleam—
 Most individual and bewildering ghost !—

And turn, and toss your brown delightful head
Amusedly, among the ancient Dead.

THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me :
 That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
 In that rich earth a richer dust concealed ;

R U P E R T B R O O K E

dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to
roam,
body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

nd think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by
England given ;
Her sights and sounds ; dreams happy as her day ;
And laughter, learnt of friends ; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

THE TREASURE

WHEN colour goes home into the eyes,
And lights that shine are shut again,
With dancing girls and sweet birds' cries
Behind the gateways of the brain ;
And that no-place which gave them birth, shall
close
The rainbow and the rose :—

Still may Time hold some golden space
Where I'll unpack that scented store
Of song and flower and sky and face,
And count, and touch, and turn them o'er,

R U P E R T B R O O K E

Musing upon them ; as a mother, who
Has watched her children all the rich day through,
Sits, quiet-handed, in the fading light,
When children sleep, ere night.

August 1914.

THE GREAT LOVER

I HAVE been so great a lover : filled my days
So proudly with the splendour of Love's praise,
The pain, the calm, and the astonishment,
Desire illimitable, and still content,
And all dear names men use, to cheat despair
For the perplexed and viewless streams that bear
Our hearts at random down the dark of life.
Now, ere the unthinking silence on that strife
Steals down, I would cheat drowsy Death so
far,

My night shall be remembered for a star
That outshone all the suns of all men's days.
Shall I not crown them with immortal praise
Whom I have loved, who have given me, dared
with me

High secrets, and in darkness knelt to see
The inenarrable godhead of delight ?
Love is a flame :—we have beaconed the world's
night.

A city :—and we have built it, these and I.
An emperor :—we have taught the world to die.

R U P E R T B R O O K E

So, for their sakes I loved, ere I go hence,
And the high cause of Love's magnificence,
And to keep loyalties young, I'll write those names
Golden for ever, eagles, crying flames,
And set them as a banner, that men may know,
To dare the generations, burn, and blow
Out on the wind of Time, shining and stream-
ing. . . .

These I have loved :

White plates and cups, clean-gleaming,
Ringed with blue lines ; and feathery, faery dust ;
Wet roofs, beneath the lamp-light ; the strong
crust
Of friendly bread ; and many-tasting food ;
Rainbows ; and the blue bitter smoke of wood ;
And radiant raindrops couching in cool flowers ;
And flowers themselves, that sway through sunny
hours,
Dreaming of moths that drink them under the
moon ;
Then, the cool kindliness of sheets, that soon
Smooth away trouble ; and the rough male
kiss
Of blankets ; grainy wood ; live hair that is
Shining and free ; blue-massing clouds ; the keen
Unpassioned beauty of a great machine ;
The benison of hot water ; furs to touch ;
The good smell of old clothes ; and other such—
The comfortable smell of friendly fingers,
Hair's fragrance, and the musty reek that lingers
About dead leaves and last year's ferns . . .

R U P E R T B R O O K E

Dear names,
And thousand other throng to me ! Royal flames ;
Sweet water's dimpling laugh from tap or spring ;
Holes in the ground ; and voices that do sing ;
Voices in laughter, too ; and body's pain,
Soon turned to peace ; and the deep-panting
train ;
Firm sands ; the little dulling edge of foam
That browns and dwindle as the wave goes
home ;
And washen stones, gay for an hour ; the cold
Graveness of iron ; moist black earthen mould ;
Sleep ; and high places ; footprints in the dew ;
And oaks ; and brown horse-chestnuts, glossy-
new ;
And new-peeled sticks ; and shining pools on
grass ;—
All these have been my loves. And these shall
pass,
Whatever passes not, in the great hour,
Nor all my passion, all my prayers, have power
To hold them with me through the gate of
Death.
They'll play deserter, turn with the traitor
breath,
Break the high bond we made, and sell Love's
trust
And sacramented covenant to the dust.
—Oh, never a doubt but, somewhere, I shall
wake,
And give what's left of love again ; and make
New friends, now strangers. . . .

R U P E R T B R O O K E

But the best I've known,
Stays here, and changes, breaks, grows old, is
blown
About the winds of the world, and fades from
brains
Of living men, and dies.

Nothing remains.

O dear my loves, O faithless, once again
This one last gift I give : that after men
Shall know, and later lovers, far removed,
Praise you, " All these were lovely " ; say, " He
loved."

CLOUDS

Down the blue night the unending columns press
In noiseless tumult, break and wave and flow,
Now tread the far South, or lift rounds of snow
Up to the white moon's hidden loveliness.
Some pause in their grave wandering comradeless,
And turn with profound gesture vague and
slow,
As who would pray good for the world, but
know
Their benediction empty as they bless.

They say that the Dead die not, but remain
Near to the rich heirs of their grief and mirth.
I think they ride the calm mid-heaven, as
these,

R U P E R T B R O O K E

In wise majestic melancholy train,
And watch the moon, and the still raging
seas,
And men, coming and going on the earth.

The Pacific, October, 1913.

THE OLD VICARAGE, GRANTCHESTER

(Café des Westens, Berlin, May, 1912.)

JUST now the lilac is in bloom,
All before my little room ;
And in my flower-beds, I think,
Smile the carnation and the pink ;
And down the borders, well I know,
The poppy and the pansy blow . . .
Oh ! there the chestnuts, summer through,
Beside the river make for you
A tunnel of green gloom, and sleep
Deeply above ; and green and deep
The stream mysterious glides beneath,
Green as a dream and deep as death—.

—Oh, damn ! I know it ! and I know
How the May fields all golden show,
And when the day is young and sweet,
Gild gloriously the bare feet
That run to bathe . . .

Du lieber Gott !

R U P E R T B R O O K E

Here am I, sweating, sick and hot,
And there the shadowed waters fresh
Lean up to embrace the naked flesh.

Temperamentvoll German Jews
Drink beer around ; and *there* the dews
Are soft beneath a morn of gold.
Here tulips bloom as they are told ;
Unkempt about those hedges blows
An English unofficial rose ;
And there the unregulated sun
Slopes down to rest when day is done,
And wakes a vague unpunctual star,
A slippered Hesper ; and there are
Meads towards Haslingfield and Coton
Where *das Betreten's not verboten* . . .

εἰθε γενοίμην . . . would I were
In Grantchester, in Grantchester !—
Some, it may be, can get in touch
With Nature there, or Earth, or such.
And clever modern men have seen
A Faun a-peeping through the green,
And felt the Classics were not dead,
To glimpse a Naiad's reedy head,
Or hear the Goat-foot piping low . . .
But these are things I do not know.
I only know that you may lie
Day long and watch the Cambridge sky,
And, flower-lulled in sleepy grass,
Hear the cool lapse of hours pass,
Until the centuries blend and blur
In Grantchester, in Grantchester . . .

R U P E R T B R O O K E

Still in the dawnlit waters cool
His ghostly Lordship swims his pool,
And tries the strokes, essays the tricks,
Long learnt on Hellespont, or Styx ;
Dan Chaucer hears his river still
Chatter beneath a phantom mill ;
Tennyson notes, with studious eye,
How Cambridge waters hurry by . . .
And in that garden, black and white
Creep whispers through the grass all night ;
And spectral dance, before the dawn,
A hundred Vicars down the lawn ;
Curates, long dust, will come and go
On lissom, clerical, printless toe ;
And oft between the boughs is seen
The sly shade of a Rural Dean . . .
Till, at a shiver in the skies,
Vanishing with Satanic cries,
The prim ecclesiastic rout
Leaves but a startled sleeper-out,
Grey heavens, the first bird's drowsy calls,
The falling house that never falls.

God ! I will pack, and take a train,
And get me to England once again !
For England's the one land, I know,
Where men with Splendid Hearts may go ;
And Cambridgeshire, of all England,
The shire for Men who Understand ;
And of *that* district I prefer
The lovely hamlet Grantchester.
For Cambridge people rarely smile,

R U P E R T B R O O K E

Being urban, squat, and packed with guile ;
And Royston men in the far South
Are black and fierce and strange of mouth ;
At Over they fling oaths at one,
And worse than oaths at Trumpington,
And Ditton girls are mean and dirty,
And there's none in Harston under thirty,
And folks in Shelford and those parts
Have twisted lips and twisted hearts,
And Barton men make cockney rhymes,
And Coton's full of nameless crimes,
And things are done you'd not believe
At Madingley, on Christmas Eve.
Strong men have run for miles and miles
When one from Cherry Hinton smiles ;
Strong men have blanched and shot their
wives

Rather than send them to St. Ives ;
Strong men have cried like babes, bydam,
To hear what happened at Babraham.
But Grantchester ! ah, Grantchester !
There's peace and holy quiet there,
Great clouds along pacific skies,
And men and women with straight eyes,
Lithe children lovelier than a dream,
A bosky wood, a slumbrous stream,
And little kindly winds that creep
Round twilight corners, half asleep.
In Grantchester their skins are white ;
They bathe by day, they bathe by night ;
The women there do all they ought ;
The men observe the Rules of Thought.

R U P E R T B R O O K E

They love the Good ; they worship Truth ;
They laugh uproariously in youth ;
(And when they get to feeling old,
They up and shoot themselves, I'm told). . .

Ah God ! to see the branches stir
Across the moon at Grantchester !
To smell the thrilling-sweet and rotten
Unforgettable, unforgotten
River smell, and hear the breeze
Sobbing in the little trees.
Say, do the elm-clumps greatly stand,
Still guardians of that holy land ?
The chestnuts shade, in reverend dream,
The yet unacademic stream ?
Is dawn a secret shy and cold
Anadyomene, silver-gold ?
And sunset still a golden sea
From Haslingfield to Madingley ?
And after, ere the night is born,
Do hares come out about the corn ?
Oh, is the water sweet and cool,
Gentle and brown, above the pool ?
And laughs the immortal river still—
Under the mill, under the mill ?
Say, is there Beauty yet to find ?
And Certainty ? and Quiet kind ?
Deep-meadows yet, for to forget
The lies, and truths, and pain ? . . . oh ! yet
Stands the Church clock at ten to three ?
And is there honey still for tea ?

R U P E R T B R O O K E

THE BUSY HEART

Now that we've done our best and worst, and
parted,
I would fill my mind with thoughts that will not
rend.

(O heart, I do not dare go empty-hearted.)

I'll think of Love in books, Love without end ;
Women with child, content ; and old men sleep-
ing ;

And wet strong ploughlands, scarred for certain
grain ;

And babes that weep, and so forget their weep-
ing ;

And the young heavens, forgetful after rain ;
And evening hush, broken by homing wings ;

And Song's nobility, and Wisdom holy,
That live, we dead. I would think of a thousand
things,

Lovely and loveable, and taste them slowly,
One after one, like tasting a sweet food.
I have need to busy my heart with quietude.

DINING-ROOM TEA

WHEN you were there, and you, and you,
Happiness crowned the night ; I too,
Laughing and looking, one of all,
I watched the quivering lamplight fall

R U P E R T B R O O K E

On plate and flowers and pouring tea
And cup and cloth ; and they and we
Flung all the dancing moments by
With jest and glitter. Lip and eye
Flashed on the glory, shone and cried,
Improvident, unmemedored ;
And fitfully and like a flame
The light of laughter went and came.
Proud in their careless transience moved
The changing faces that I loved.

Till suddenly, and otherwhence,
I looked upon your innocence.
For lifted clear and still and strange
From the dark woven flow of change
Under a vast and starless sky
I saw the immortal moment lie.
One instant I, an instant, knew
As God knows all. And it and you
I, above Time, oh, blind ! could see
In witless immortality.
I saw the marble cup ; the tea,
Hung on the air, an amber stream ;
I saw the fire's unglittering gleam,
The painted flame, the frozen smoke.
No more the flooding lamplight broke
On flying eyes and lips and hair ;
But lay, but slept unbroken there,
On stiller flesh, and body breathless,
And lips and laughter stayed and deathless,
And words on which no silence grew.
Light was more alive than you.

R U P E R T B R O O K E

For suddenly, and otherwhence,
I looked on your magnificence.
I saw the stillness and the light,
And you, august, immortal, white,
Holy and strange ; and every glint
Posture and jest and thought and tint
Freed from the mask of transiency,
Triumphant in eternity,
Immote, immortal.

Dazed at length
Human eyes grew, mortal strength
Wearied ; and Time began to creep.
Change closed about me like a sleep.
Light glinted on the eyes I loved.
The cup was filled. The bodies moved.
The drifting petal came to ground.
The laughter chimed its perfect round.
The broken syllable was ended.
And I, so certain and so friended,
How could I cloud, or how distress
The heaven of your unconsciousness ?
Or shake at Time's sufficient spell,
Stammering of lights unutterable ?
The eternal holiness of you,
The timeless end, you never knew,
The peace that lay, the light that shone.
You never knew that I had gone
A million miles away, and stayed
A million years. The laughter played
Unbroken round me ; and the jest
Flashed on. And we that knew the best

R U P E R T B R O O K E

Down wonderful hours grew happier yet.
I sang at heart, and talked, and ate,
And lived from laugh to laugh, I too,
When you were there, and you, and you.

FRANCIS BURROWS

THE PRAYER TO DEMETER

MOTHER whose hair I grasp, whose bosom I tread,
Thy son adopted. Thou who dost so charm
me

And in thy lappels of affection warm me,
Heap all thine other misery on my head ;

Madness alone of evils do I dread,
Against its imminent presence guard and arm
me,

Suffer its broad flung shadow not to harm me
But plunge me rather with the naked dead.

Yet if it must come, let it be entire ;
Cast then upon me unillumined night,
One whole eclipse not knowing any fire
To give it record of the former light.
Complete destruction of the heart's desire,
A ruin of thought and audience and sight.

THE GIANT'S DIRGE

REMEMBER him who battled here,
What was his living character ?
To friends an heart for ever filled

F R A N C I S B U R R O W S

With love and with compassion brave ;
To foes a power never stilled

In pushing vengeance to the grave ;
Where is his spirit gone now, O where ?

What of his ten grand paces here
Whose motion was a perfect sphere ?
To friends a making unafraid,

A sure defence, a wall of glass.
To foes a hidden trap well laid

To catch them stalking through the grass ;
Where is he walking now, O where ?

What of his power who is here
Enclosed within the sepulchre ?
To friends an eager sword of joy,

A shield to nestle underneath.
To foes whose love is to destroy,

A stumbling block, a hidden death ;
Where is his power gone now, O where ?

What of his eye that floated here
Like sky-born dewy gossamer ?
To friends the ever-sought desire,

The hope achieved, the loving cup ;
To foes an unassaulted fire,

A furnace withering them up.
Where is he shining now, O where ?

What of the head that breathed so here
And the hair beloved so, is it sere ;
To friends a shadow shedding stars,

F R A N C I S B U R R O W S

Like blessings, from the upper deep ;
To foes a poisoned tree that mars
Men's lives thereunder laid asleep.
Where does it blossom now, O where ?

He lives, is living everywhere,
Where human hearts are, he is there.
To friends a soul of certainty
That love though lost is more than none.
To foes an inability
To say, " We shew him, we alone,
His soul is here, we slew him here."

THE UNFORGOTTEN

THERE is a cave beneath the throne of grace
Where these have honoured and remembered
place ;
Strong hairy men, huge-jawed, with wiry limbs,
Half hid in mist, the heroes of old times.
They lie among the pots and flints and beads
Their friends once buried with them as the needs
Of the after-life, to hunt with and to slay with,
And flay and cook, or in repose to play with.
Here he who shaped the flint and bound to axe
And arrow first ; who made the thread of flax
And hemp to weave ; and he who to the plough
Harnessed and tamed the bull and milked the
cow ;

F R A N C I S B U R R O W S

Who taught to bake and grind and till the seed
Of corn sufficient for the future's need ;
And he who said: "These are my children, these;
My blood between them and their enemies ;
For when I age and cannot win my meat,
They shall become new head and hands and
feet " ;
And he who said : " Let none of our tribe die
Slain by ourselves with violence. For why,
Our foes are plentiful, our friends are few,
Our living scarce. All may have work to do,
As hunting, warring, digging for the strong,
Or potting, cooking, weaving for the young,
The old, the weak, yet for adornment skilled "—
Too early born and by his brethren killed.
Here he who dreamed a strange dream in the
night,
And from his rushes springing swat with fright,
But thought and said with opened eyes, " 'Tis
beauty,"
And terror left him. Those who spoke of duty,
Mercy and truth, and taught the undying soul,
And many more. And many a grunt and growl
They give in friendly dreams ; when haunches
quiver
And nostrils widen, and hands do twitch and
shiver.
And often one awakes, and blinks, half speaks,
And yawns and licks and blows upon his cheeks :

Pure spirits laugh, and with a kindly eye
The father views their rough-haired majesty.

THE WELL

SEE this plashing fount enshrined,
Some ancient people roofed and lined ;
Some memory here of a forlorn rime,
A thought, a breath of a thought sublime,
A sobbing under the wings of time.

See the ancient people's grave :
No Andromache, no slave
Water here for a master draws,
No slaves longer laugh and pause,
All's strange language and new laws.

O words, be good to impart assurance
Of hope, of memory, of endurance,
O flourish grass upon our tomb,
Grant us, sunk in a little room,
Both a sepulchre and home.

EGYPTIAN

THE pyramid is built, is built,
And stone by stone the sphinx ;
Upon the ground the wine is spilt,
And deep the builder drinks.
Deeply the wise man in the desert thinks.

F R A N C I S B U R R O W S

Hark to the lanterned gondolas !
The stream is incense-calmed ;
We smoke, we draw the gods with praise,
They walk amongst us charmed.
Cries : " *Never are the desert-sands disarmed.*"

Our building toil is done, is done,
All strifes and quarrels cease ;
And slaves and masters are at one,
And enemies at peace.
Cries : " *Yet the sands are stirred and wars increase.*"

Riches and joy and thankfulness
By our rich river are ;
To see our noble work and bless
Shall travellers come afar.
Cries : " *Yes, a few, but many more for war.*"

LIFE

WHEN I consider this, that bare
Water and earth and common air
Combine together to compose
A being who breathes and stands and goes,
With eyes to see the sun, with brain
To contemplate his origin,
I marvel not at death and pain
But rather how he should have been.

A. Y. C A M P B E L L

ANIMULA VAGULA

NIGHT stirs but wakens not, her breathings climb
To one slow sigh ; the strokes of many twelves
From unseen spires mechanically chime,
Mingling like echoes, to frustrate themselves ;
My soul, remember Time.

The tones like smoke into the stillness curl,
The slippered hours their placid business ply,
And in thy hand there lies occasion's pearl ;
But thou art playing with it absently
And dreaming, like a girl.

A BIRD

His haunts are by the brackish ways
Where rivers and sea-currents meet ;
He is familiar with the sprays,
Over the stones his flight is fleet.

Low, low he flutters, like a rat
That scampers up a river-bank ;
Swift, lizard-like, he scours the flat
Where pools are wersh and weeds are dank.

A. Y. C A M P B E L L

The fresh green smell of inland groves,
The pureness of the upper air,
Are poorer than his pungent coves
That hold strange spices everywhere.

Strong is the salt of open sea ;
Far out, the virgin brine is keen :
No home is there for such as he,
Out of the beach he is not seen.

By shallows and capricious foams
Are the queer corners he frequents,
And in an idle humour roams
The borderland of elements.

THE DROMEDARY

IN dreams I see the Dromedary still,
As once in a gay park I saw him stand :
A thousand eyes in vulgar wonder scanned
His humps and hairy neck, and gazed their fill
At his lank shanks and mocked with laughter
shril.
He never moved : and if his Eastern land
Flashed on his eye with stretches of hot sand,
It wrung no mute appeal from his proud will.
He blinked upon the rabble lazily ;
And still some trace of majesty forlorn

A. Y. C A M P B E L L

And a coarse grace remained : his head was high,
Though his gaunt flanks with a great mange
were worn :
There was not any yearning in his eye,
But on his lips and nostrils infinite scorn.

THE PANIC

P A L E in her evening silks she sat
That but a week had been my bride ;
Then, while the stars we wondered at,
Without a word she left my side ;
Devious and silent as a bat,
I watched her round the garden glide.

Soon o'er the moonlit lawn she streamed,
Then floated idly down the glade ;
Now like a forest nymph she seemed,
Now like a light within a shade ;
She turned, and for a moment gleamed,
And suddenly I saw her fade.

I had been held in tranced stare
Till she had vanished from my sight ;
Then did I start in wild despair,
And followed fast in mad affright ;
What if herself a spirit were
And had so soon rejoined the night ?

G. K. CHESTERTON

WINE AND WATER

OLD Noah he had an ostrich farm and fowls on
the largest scale,
He ate his egg with a ladle in an egg-cup big as
a pail,
And the soup he took was Elephant Soup and
the fish he took was Whale,
But they all were small to the cellar he took when
he set out to sail,
And Noah he often said to his wife when he sat
down to dine,
“ I don’t care where the water goes if it doesn’t
get into the wine.”

The cataract of the cliff of heaven fell blinding
off the brink
As if it would wash the stars away as suds go
down a sink,
The seven heavens came roaring down for the
throats of hell to drink,
And Noah he cocked his eye and said, “ It looks
like rain, I think,
The water has drowned the Matterhorn as deep as
a Mendip mine,
But I don’t care where the water goes if it doesn’t
get into the wine.”

G. K. CHESTERTON

But Noah he sinned, and we have sinned ; on
tipsy feet we trod,
Till a great big black teetotaller was sent to us
for a rod,
And you can't get wine at a P.S.A., or chapel,
or Eisteddfod,
But the Curse of Water has come again because
of the wrath of God,
And water is on the Bishop's board and the
Higher Thinker's shrine,
But I don't care where the water goes if it doesn't
get into the wine.

THE ROLLING ENGLISH ROAD

BEFORE the Roman came to Rye or out of Severn
strode,
The rolling English drunkard made the rolling
English road.
A reeling road, a rolling road, that rambles round
the shire,
And after him the parson ran, the sexton and the
squire ;
A merry road, a mazy road, and such as we did
tread,
The night we went to Birmingham by way of
Beachy Head.
I knew no harm of Bonaparte and plenty of the
Squire,
And for to fight the Frenchman I did not much
desire ;

G. K. CHESTERTON

But I did bash their bagginets because they came arrayed
To straighten out the crooked road an English drunkard made,
When you and I went down the lane with ale-mugs in our hands,
The night we went to Glastonbury by way of Goodwin Sands.

His sins they were forgiven him ; or why do flowers run
Behind him ; and the hedges all strengthening in the sun ?
The wild thing went from left to right and knew not which was which,
But the wild rose was above him when they found him in the ditch.
God pardon us, nor harden us : we did not see so clear
The night we went to Bannockburn by way of Brighton Pier.

My friends, we will not go again or ape an ancient rage,
Or stretch the folly of our youth to be the shame of age,
But walk with clearer eyes and ears this path that wandereth,
And see undrugged in evening light the decent inn of death ;
But there is good news yet to hear and fine things to be seen,
Before we go to Paradise by way of Kensal Green.

G. K. C H E S T E R T O N

THE DONKEY

WHEN fishes flew and forests walked
And figs grew upon thorn,
Some moment when the moon was blood
Then surely I was born ;

With monstrous head and sickening cry
And ears like errant wings,
The devil's walking parody
On all four-footed things.

The tattered outlaw of the earth,
Of ancient crooked will ;
Starve, scourge, deride me : I am dumb,
I keep my secret still.

Fools ! For I also had my hour ;
One far fierce hour and sweet :
There was a shout about my ears,
And palms before my feet.

THE SECRET PEOPLE

SMILE at us, pay us, pass us ; but do not quite
forget,
For we are the people of England, that never has
spoken yet.

G. K. C H E S T E R T O N

There is many a fat farmer that drinks less cheerfully,
There is many a free French peasant who is richer
and sadder than we.

There are no folk in the whole world so helpless or
so wise.

There is hunger in our bellies, there is laughter
in our eyes;

You laugh at us and love us, both mugs and eyes
are wet:

Only you do not know us. For we have not
spoken yet.

The fine French kings came over in a flutter of
flags and dames.

We liked their smiles and battles, but we never
could say their names.

The blood ran red to Bosworth and the high
French lords went down;

There was naught but a naked people under a
naked crown.

And the eyes of the King's Servants turned
terribly every way,

And the gold of the King's Servants rose higher
every day.

They burnt the homes of the shaven men, that
had been quaint and kind,

Till there was no bed in a monk's house, nor food
that man could find.

The inns of God where no man paid, that were
the wall of the weak,

The King's Servants ate them all. And still we
did not speak.

G. K. C H E S T E R T O N

And the face of the King's Servants grew greater
than the King :
He tricked them, and they trapped him, and
stood round him in a ring.
The new grave lords closed round him, that had
eaten the abbey's fruits,
And the men of the new religion, with their Bibles
in their boots,
We saw their shoulders moving, to menace or
discuss,
And some were pure and some were vile ; but
none took heed of us.
We saw the King as they killed him, and his face
was proud and pale ;
And a few men talked of freedom, while England
talked of ale.

A war that we understood not came over the
world and woke
Americans, Frenchmen, Irish ; but we knew not
the things they spoke.
They talked about rights and nature and peace
and the people's reign :
And the squires, our masters, bade us fight ; and
never scorned us again.
Weak if we be for ever, could none condemn us
then ;
Men called us serfs and drudges ; men knew that
we were men.
In foam and flame at Trafalgar, on Albuera plains,
We did and died like lions, to keep ourselves in
chains,

G. K. C H E S T E R T O N

We lay in living ruins ; firing and fearing not
The strange fierce face of the Frenchmen who
knew for what they fought,
And the man who seemed to be more than man
we strained against and broke ;
And we broke our own rights with him. And
still we never spoke.

Our path of glory ended; we never heard guns again.
But the squire seemed struck in the saddle ; he
was foolish, as if in pain
He leaned on a staggering lawyer, he clutched a
cringing Jew,
He was stricken ; it may be, after all, he was
stricken at Waterloo.
Or perhaps the shades of the shaven men, whose
spoil is in his house,
Come back in shining shapes at last to spoil his
last carouse :
We only know the last sad squires ride slowly
towards the sea,
And a new people takes the land : and still it is
not we.

They have given us into the hands of the new
unhappy lords,
Lords without anger and honour, who dare not
carry their swords.
They fight by shuffling papers ; they have bright
dead alien eyes ;
They look at our labour and laughter as a tired
man looks at flies.

G. K. CHESTERTON

And the load of their loveless pity is worse than
the ancient wrongs,
Their doors are shut in the evening ; and they
know no songs.

We hear men speaking for us of new laws strong
and sweet,

Yet is there no man speaketh as we speak in the
street.

It may be we shall rise the last as Frenchmen
rose the first,

Our wrath come after Russia's wrath and our
wrath be the worst.

It may be we are meant to mark with our riot
and our rest

God's scorn for all men governing. It may be
beer is best.

But we are the people of England ; and we have
not spoken yet.

Smile at us, pay us, pass us. But so not quite
forget.

FROM THE BALLAD OF THE WHITE
HORSE

FAR northward and far westward
The distant tribes drew nigh,
Plains beyond plains, fell beyond fell,
That a man at sunset sees so well,
And the tiny coloured towns that dwell
In the corners of the sky.

G. K. C H E S T E R T O N

But dark and thick as thronged the host,
With drum and torch and blade,
The still-eyed King sat pondering,
As one that watches a live thing,
 The scoured chalk ; and he said,

“ Though I give this land to Our Lady,
 That helped me in Athelney,
Though lordlier trees and lustier sod
And happier hills hath no flesh trod
Than the garden of the Mother of God
 Between Thames side and the sea,

“ I know that weeds shall grow in it
 Faster than men can burn ;
And though they scatter now and go,
In some far century, sad and slow,
I have a vision, and I know
 The heathen shall return.

“ They shall not come with warships,
 They shall not waste with brands,
But books be all their eating,
And ink be on their hands.

“ Not with the humour of hunters
 Or savage skill in war,
But ordering all things with dead words,
Strings shall they make of beasts and birds
 And wheels of wind and star.

G. K. C H E S T E R T O N

“ They shall come mild as monkish clerks,
With many a scroll and pen ;
And backward shall ye turn and gaze,
Desiring one of Alfred’s days,
When pagans still were men.

“ The dear sun dwarfed of dreadful suns,
Like fiercer flowers on stalk,
Earth lost and little like a pea
In high heaven’s towering forestry,
—These be the small weeds ye shall see
Crawl, covering the chalk.

“ But though they bridge St. Mary’s sea,
Or steal St. Michael’s wing—
Though they rear marvels over us,
Greater than great Vergilius
Wrought for the Roman king ;

“ By this sign you shall know them,
The breaking of the sword,
And Man no more a free knight,
That loves or hates his lord.

“ Yea, this shall be the sign of them,
The sign of the dying fire ;
And Man made like a half-wit,
That knows not of his sire.

“ What though they come with scroll and pen,
And grave as a shaven clerk,
By this sign you shall know them,
That they ruin and make dark ;

G. K. CHESTERTON

“ By all men bond to Nothing,
 Being slaves without a lord,
By one blind idiot world obeyed,
 Too blind to be abhorred ;

“ By terror and the cruel tales
 Of curse in bone and kin,
By weird and weakness winning,
 Accursed from the beginning,
By detail of the sinning,
 And denial of the sin ;

“ By thought a crawling ruin,
 By life a leaping mire,
By a broken heart in the breast of the world,
 And the end of the world’s desire ;

“ By God and man dishonoured,
 By death and life made vain,
Know ye the old barbarian,
 The barbarian come again——

“ When is great talk of trend and tide,
 And wisdom and destiny,
Hail that undying heathen
 That is sadder than the sea.

“ In what wise men shall smite him,
 Or the Cross stand up again,
Or charity, or chivalry,

G. K. CHESTERTON

My vision saith not ; and I see
No more ; but now ride doubtfully
To the battle of the plain."

And the grass-edge of the great down
Was clean cut as a lawn,
While the levies thronged from near and far,
From the warm woods of the western star,
And the King went out to his last war
On a tall grey horse at dawn.

And news of his far-off fighting
Came slowly and brokenly
From the land of the East Saxons,
From the sunrise and the sea,

From the plains of the white sunrise,
And sad St. Edmund's crown,
Where the pools of Essex pale and gleam
Out beyond London Town——

In mighty and doubtful fragments,
Like faint or fabled wars,
Climbed the old hills of his renown.
Where the bald brow of White Horse Down
Is close to the cold stars.

But away in the eastern places
The wind of death walked high,
And a raid was driven athwart the raid,
The sky reddened and the smoke swayed,
And the tall grey horse went by.

G. K. C H E S T E R T O N

The gates of the great river
Were breached as with a barge,
The walls sank crowded, say the scribes,
And high towers populous with tribes
Seemed leaning from the charge.

Smoke like rebellious heavens rolled
Curled over coloured flames,
Billowed in monstrous purple dreams
In the mighty pools of Thames.

Loud was the war on London wall,
And loud in London gates,
And loud the sea-kings in the cloud
Broke through their dreaming gods, and loud
Cried on their dreadful fates.

And all the while on White Horse Hill
The horse lay long and wan,
The turf crawled and the fungus crept,
And the little sorrel, while all men slept,
Unwrought the work of man.

With velvet finger, velvet foot,
The fierce soft mosses then
Crept on the large white commonweal
All folk had striven to strip and peel,
And the grass, like a great green witch's wheel,
Unwound the toils of men.

G. K. C H E S T E R T O N

And clover and silent thistle throve,
 And buds burst silently,
With little care for the Thames Valley
 Or what things there might be—

That away on the widening river,
 In the eastern plains for crown
Stood up in the pale purple sky
 One turret of smoke like ivory ;
And the smoke changed and the wind went by,
 And the King took London Town.

PADRAIC COLUM

THE OLD WOMAN OF THE ROADS

O, to have a little house !
To own the hearth and stool and all !
The heaped up sods upon the fire
The pile of turf again' the wall !

To have a clock with weights and chains,
And pendulum swinging up and down !
A dresser filled with shining delph,
Speckled with white and blue and brown !

I could be busy all the day
Cleaning and sweeping hearth and floor,
And fixing on their shelf again
My white and blue and speckled store !

I could be quiet there at night
Beside the fire and by myself,
Sure of a bed, and loth to leave
The ticking clock and shining delph !

Och ! but I'm weary of mist and dark,
And roads where there's never a house or bush,
And tired I am of bog and road,
And the crying wind and the lonesome hush !

P A D R A I C C O L U M

And I am praying to God on high,
And I am praying Him night and day,
For a little house—a house of my own—
Out of the wind's and rain's way.

F R A N C E S C O R N F O R D

A U T U M N E V E N I N G

THE shadows flickering, the daylight dying,
And I upon the old red sofa lying,
The great brown shadows leaping up the wall,
The sparrows twittering ; and that is all.

I thought to send my soul to far-off lands,
Where fairies scamper on the windy sands,
Or where the autumn rain comes drumming down
On huddled roofs in an enchanted town.

But O my sleepy soul, it will not roam,
It is too happy and too warm at home :
With just the shadows leaping up the wall,
The sparrows twittering ; and that is all.

W. H. D A V I E S

DAYS TOO SHORT

WHEN Primroses are out in Spring,
And small, blue violets come between ;
When merry birds sing on boughs green,
And rills, as soon as born, must sing ;

When butterflies will make side-leaps,
As though escaped from Nature's hand
Ere perfect quite ; and bees will stand
Upon their heads in fragrant deeps ;

When small clouds are so silvery white
Each seems a broken rimmèd moon—
When such things are, this world too soon,
For me, doth wear the veil of Night.

THE EXAMPLE

HERE'S an example from
A Butterfly ;
That on a rough, hard rock
Happy can lie ;
Friendless and all alone
On this unsweetened stone.

W. H. D A V I E S

Now let my bed be hard
 No care take I ;
I'll make my joy like this
 Small Butterfly ;
Whose happy heart has power
 To make a stone a flower.

THE EAST IN GOLD

SOMEHOW this world is wonderful at times,
 As it has been from early morn in May ;
Since I first heard the cock-a-doodle-do,
 Timekeeper on green farms—at break of day.

Soon after that I heard ten thousand birds,
 Which made me think an angel brought a bin
Of golden grain, and none was scattered yet—
 To rouse those birds to make that merry din.

I could not sleep again, for such wild cries,
 And went out early into their green world ;
And then I saw what set their little tongues
 To scream for joy—they saw the East in gold.

THE HAPPY CHILD

I SAW this day sweet flowers grow thick—
But not one like the child did pick.

W. H. D A V I E S

I heard the packhounds in green park—
But no dog like the child heard bark.

I heard this day bird after bird—
But not one like the child has heard.

A hundred butterflies saw I—
But not one like the child saw fly.

I saw the horses roll in grass—
But no horse like the child saw pass.

My world this day has lovely been—
But not like what the child has seen.

A GREAT TIME

SWEET Chance, that led my steps abroad,
Beyond the town, where wild flowers grow—
A rainbow and a cuckoo, Lord,
How rich and great the times are now !

Know, all ye sheep
And cows, that keep
On staring that I stand so long
In grass that's wet from heavy rain—
A rainbow and a cuckoo's song
May never come together again ;

May never come
This side the tomb.

THE WHITE CASCADE

WHAT happy mortal sees that mountain now,
The white cascade that's shining on its brow ;

The white cascade that's both a bird and star,
That has a ten-mile voice and shines as far ?

Though I may never leave this land again,
Yet every spring my mind must cross the main

To hear and see that water-bird and star
That on the mountain sings, and shines so far.

IN MAY

YES, I will spend the livelong day
With Nature in this month of May ;
And sit beneath the trees, and share
My bread with birds whose homes are there ;
While cows lie down to eat, and sheep
Stand to their necks in grass so deep ;
While birds do sing with all their might,
As though they felt the earth in flight.
This is the hour I dreamed of, when
I sat surrounded by poor men ;

W. H. DAVIES

And thought of how the Arab sat
Alone at evening, gazing at
The stars that bubbled in clear skies ;
And of young dreamers, when their eyes
Enjoyed methought a precious boon
In the adventures of the Moon
Whose light, behind the Clouds' dark bars,
Searched for her stolen flocks of stars.
When I, hemmed in by wrecks of men,
Thought of some lonely cottage then,
Full of sweet books ; and miles of sea,
With passing ships, in front of me ;
And having, on the other hand,
A flowery, green, bird-singing land.

THUNDERSTORMS

My mind has thunderstorms,
That brood for heavy hours :
Until they rain me words,
My thoughts are drooping flowers
And sulking, silent birds.

Yet come, dark thunderstorms,
And brood your heavy hours ;
For when you rain me words
My thoughts are dancing flowers
And joyful singing birds.

SWEET STAY-AT-HOME

SWEET Stay-at-Home, sweet Well-content,
Thou knowest of no strange continent :
Thou hast not felt thy bosom keep
A gentle motion with the deep ;
Thou hast not sailed in Indian seas,
Where scent comes forth in every breeze.
Thou hast not seen the rich grape grow
For miles, as far as eyes can go ;
Thou hast not seen a summer's night
When maids could sew by a worm's light ;
Nor the North Sea in spring send out
Bright trees that like birds flit about
In solid cages of white ice—
Sweet Stay-at-Home, sweet Love-one-place.
Thou hast not seen black fingers pick
White cotton when the bloom is thick,
Nor heard black throats in harmony ;
Nor hast thou sat on stones that lie
Flat on the earth, that once did rise
To hide proud kings from common eyes.
Thou hast not seen plains full of bloom
Where green things had such little room
They pleased the eye like fairer flowers—
Sweet Stay-at-Home, all these long hours.
Sweet Well-content, sweet Love-one-place,
Sweet, simple maid, bless thy dear face ;
For thou hast made more homely stuff
Nurture thy gentle self enough ;
I love thee for a heart that's kind—
Not for the knowledge in thy mind.

EDWARD L. DAVISON

THE TREES

I DID not know your names and yet I saw
The handiwork of Beauty in your boughs,
I worshipped as the Druids did, in awe,
Feeling at Spring my pagan soul arouse
To see your leaf-buds open to the day,
And dull green moss upon your ragged girth,
The hoary sanctity of your decay,
Life and Death glimmering upon the Earth.

IN THIS DARK HOUSE

I SHALL come back to die
From a far place at last
After my life's carouse
In the old bed to lie,
Remembering the past
In this dark house.

Because of a clock's chime
In the long waste of night
I shall awake and wait
At that calm lonely time
Each smell and sound and sight
Mysterious and innate :

E D W A R D L. D A V I S O N

Some shadow on the wall
When curtains by the door
Move in a draught of wind ;
Or else a light footfall
In a near corridor ;
Even to feel the kind
Caress of a cool hand
Smoothing the draggled hair
Back from my shrunken brow,
And strive to understand
The woman's presence there,
And whence she came, and how.

What gust of wind that night
Shall mutter her lost name
Through windows open wide,
And twist the flickering light
Of a sole candle's flame
Smoking from side to side,
Till the last spark it blows
Sets a moth's wings afire
As the faint flame goes out ?

Some distant door may close ;
Perhaps a heavy chair
On bare floors dragged about
O'er the low ceiling sound,
And the thin twig of a tree
Knock on my window-pane
Till all the night around
Is listening with me,

EDWARD L. DAVISON

While like a noise of rain
Leaves rustle in the wind.

Then from the inner gloom
The scratching of a mouse
May echo down my mind
And sound around the room
In this dark house.

The vague scent of a flower,
Smelt then in that warm air
From gardens drifting in,
May slowly overpower
The vapid lavender,
Till feebly I begin
To count the scents I knew
And name them one by one,
And search the names for this.

Dreams will be swift and few
Ere that last night be done,
And gradual silences
In each long interim
Of halting time awake
Confuse all conscious sense.
Shadows will grow more dim,
And sound and scent forsake
The dark ere dawn commence.

In the new morning then,
So fixed the stare and fast,

E D W A R D L. D A V I S O N

The calm unseeing eye
Will never close again.

* * *

I shall come back at last
To this dark house to die.

WALTER DE LA MARE

THE LISTENERS

“ Is there anybody there ? ” said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlight door ;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest’s ferny floor :
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveller’s head :
And he smote upon the door again a second time ;
“ Is there anybody there ? ” he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller ;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men :
Stood thronging the faint moon beams on the
dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely traveller’s call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
'Neath the starred and leafy sky ;

WALTER DE LA MARE

For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head :—
“ Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word,” he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the still
house
From the one man left awake :
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone
And how the silence surged softly backward
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

ARABIA

FAR are the shades of Arabia,
Where the Princes ride at noon,
'Mid the verdurous vales and thickets,
Under the ghost of the moon ;
And so dark is that vaulted purple
Flowers in the forest rise
And toss into blossom 'gainst the phantom
stars
Pale in the noonday skies.

Sweet is the music of Arabia
In my heart, when out of dreams
I still in the thin clear mirk of dawn
Descry her gliding streams ;

WALTER DE LA MARE

Hear her strange lutes on the green banks
Ring loud with the grief and delight
Of the dim-silked, dark-haired Musicians
In the brooding silence of night.

They haunt me—her lutes and her forests ;
No beauty on earth I see
But shadowed with that dream recalls
Her loveliness to me :
Still eyes look coldly upon me,
Cold voices whisper and say—
“ He is crazed with the spell of far Arabia,
They have stolen his wits away.”

MUSIC

WHEN music sounds, gone is the earth I know,
And all her lovely things even lovelier grow ;
Her flowers in vision flame, her forest trees
Lift burdened branches, stilled with ecstasies.

When music sounds, out of the water rise
Naiads whose beauty dims my waking eyes,
Rapt in strange dream burns each enchanted face,
With solemn echoing stirs their dwelling-place.

When music sounds, all that I was I am
Ere to this haunt of brooding dust I came ;
And from Time’s woods break into distant song
The swift-winged hours, as I hasten along.

THE SCRIBE

WHAT lovely things
Thy hand hath made,
The smooth-plumed bird
In its emerald shade,
The seed of the grass,
The speck of stone
Which the wayfaring ant
Stirs, and hastes on.

Though I should sit
By some tarn in Thy hills,
Using its ink
As the spirit wills
To write of Earth's wonders
Its live willed things,
Flit would the ages
On soundless wings
Ere unto Z
My pen drew nigh,
Leviathan told,
And the honey-fly ;
And still would remain
My wit to try—
My worn reeds broken,
The dark tarn dry,
All words forgotten—
Thou, Lord, and I.

THE GHOST

“Who knocks ?” “I, who was beautiful
Beyond all dreams to restore,
I from the roots of the dark thorn am hither,
And knock on the door.”

“Who speaks ?” “I—once was my speech
Sweet as the bird’s on the air,
When echo lurks by the waters to heed ;
’Tis I speak thee fair.”

“Dark is the hour !” “Aye, and cold.”
“Lone is my house.” “Ah, but mine ?”
“Sight, touch, lips, eyes gleamed in vain.”
“Long dead these to thine.”

Silence. Still faint on the porch
Broke the flames of the stars.
In gloom groped a hope-wearied hand
Over keys, bolts, and bars.

A face peered. All the grey night
In chaos of vacancy shone ;
Nought but vast sorrow was there—
The sweet cheat gone.

WALTER DE LA MARE

CLEAR EYES

CLEAR eyes do dim at last,
And cheeks outlive their rose.
Time, heedless of the past,
No loving kindness knows ;
Chill unto mortal lip
Still Lethe flows.

Griefs, too, but brief while stay,
And sorrow, being o'er,
Its salt tears shed away,
Woundeth the heart no more.
Stealthily lave these waters
That solemn shore.

Ah, then, sweet face burn on,
While yet quick memory lives !
And Sorrow, ere thou art gone,
Know that my heart forgives—
Ere yet, grown cold in peace,
It loves not, nor grieves.

FARE WELL

WHEN I lie where shades of darkness
Shall no more assail mine eyes,
Nor the rain make lamentation
When the wind sighs ;

WALTER DE LA MARE

How will fare the world whose wonder
Was the very proof of me ?
Memory fades, must the remembered
Perishing be ?

Oh, when this my dust surrenders
Hand, foot, lip to dust again,
May those loved and loving faces
Please other men !

May the rusting harvest hedgerow
Still the Traveller's Joy entwine,
And as happy children gather
Posies once mine.

Look thy last on all things lovely,
Every hour. Let no night
Seal thy sense in deathly slumber
Till to delight
Thou have paid thy utmost blessing ;
Since that all things thou wouldst praise
Beauty took from those who loved them
In other days.

ALL THAT'S PAST

VERY old are the woods ;
And the buds that break
Out of the briar's boughs,
When March winds wake,

WALTER DE LA MARE

So old with their beauty are—
 Oh, no man knows
Through what wild centuries
 Roves back the rose.

Very old are the brooks ;
 And the rills that rise
When snow sleeps cold beneath
 The azure skies
Sing such a history
 Of come and gone,
Their every drop is as wise
 As Solomon.

Very old are we men ;
 Our dreams are tales
Told in dim Eden
 By Eve's nightingales ;
We wake and whisper awhile,
 But, the day gone by,
Silence and sleep like fields
 Of Amaranth lie.

THE SONG OF THE MAD PRINCE

Who said, " Peacock Pie " ?
 The old King to the sparrow :
Who said, " Crops are ripe " ?
 Rust to the harrow :

WALTER DE LA MARE

Who said, "Where sleeps she now ?
Where rests she now her head,
Bathed in Eve's loveliness " ?—
That's what I said.

Who said, "Ay, mum's the word " ?
Sexton to willow :
Who said, "Green dust for dreams,
Moss for a pillow " ?
Who said, "All Time's delight
Hath she for narrow bed ;
Life's troubled bubble broken " ?—
That's what I said.

JOHN DRINKWATER

BIRTHRIGHT

LORD RAMESES of Egypt sighed
Because a summer evening passed;
And little Ariadne cried
That summer fancy fell at last
To dust; and young Verona died
When beauty's hour was overcast.

Theirs was the bitterness we know
Because the clouds of hawthorn keep
So short a state, and kisses go
To tombs unfathomably deep,
While Rameses and Romeo
And little Ariadne sleep.

MOONLIT APPLES

AT the top of the house the apples are laid in rows,
And the skylight lets the moonlight in, and those
Apples are deep-sea apples of green. There goes
A cloud on the moon in the autumn night.

JOHN DRINKWATER

A mouse in the wainscot scratches, and scratches,
and then

There is no sound at the top of the house of men
Or mice ; and the cloud is blown, and the moon
again

Dapples the apples with deep-sea light.

They are lying in rows there, under the gloomy
beams ;

On the sagging floor ; they gather the silver
streams

Out of the moon, those moonlit apples of dreams,
And quiet is the steep stair under.

In the corridors under there is nothing but sleep,
And stiller than ever on orchard boughs they
keep

Tryst with the moon, and deep is the silence,
deep

On moon-washed apples of wonder.

R. C. K. ENSOR

ODE TO REALITY

O REAL, O That Which Is,
Beyond all earthly bliss
My spirit prays to be at one with Thee ;
Away from that which seems,
From unenduring dreams,
From vain pursuits and vainer meeds set free.

How rosy to our eyes
The mists of error rise,
The proud pavilions that we weave at will !
How glittering the ray
Of that illusive day,
The hills how grand, the vales how green and
still !

And how inviting yet
The service of deceit,
Paid by the crowd that does not understand,
Parents and friends and foes
All bowing down to those
Who against Thee have lifted up their hand !

Ah, but on whomsoever
Amid such glib endeavour
Thy light has shined in sudden sovereignty,

R. C. K. E N S O R

He who has fallen and heard
Thy spirit-searching word :
Why kick against the pricks ? Why outrage Me ?

He can no longer stay
There in the easy way,
No longer please himself with make-believe,
No longer shape at will
The forms of good and ill
And what he shall reject and what receive.

Nor may he dwell content
In self-aggrandisement,
To the deep wrong of modern Mammon blind ;
Nor can he drown his cares
Among the doctrinaires,
Who think by sowing hate to save mankind.

For every scheme of vision
He sees as the condition
Not of the truest only but the best—
The riches of all wealth,
The beauty of Beauty's self—
That on Thee and within Thee it should rest.

By Thee our bounds are set ;
Thou madest us ; and yet
O Mother, when we strain to see Thy face,
Still dost Thou tease our prying
With masks and mystifying,
Still hold us at arm's length from Thy embrace !

R. C. K. E N S O R

Yet would I rather in act
Plough with the iron Fact
And earn at least some harvest that is bread,
Than rich and popular
In gay Imposture's car
Dazzle mankind and leave them still unfed.

Rather would I in thought
Miss all that I had sought,
Still pining on Negation's desert isle,
Than with the current float
In Pragmatism's boat
Down to the fatal shore where sirens smile.

Rather would I be thrown
Against Thine altar-stone,
Unsanctified, unpitied, unreprimed,
Than in some other shrine
Sup the priests' meat and wine,
Taking the wages of a world deceived.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

RIOUPÉROUX

HIGH and solemn mountains guard Rioupéroux,
—Small untidy village where the river drives a
mill :

Frail as wood anemones, white and frail were
you,
And drooping a little, like the slender daffodil.

Oh I will go to France again, and tramp the
valley through,
And I will change these gentle clothes for clog
and corduroy,
And work with the mill-lands of black
Rioupéroux,
And walk with you, and talk with you, like any
other boy.

WAR SONG OF THE SARACENS

WE are they who come faster than fate : we are
they who ride early or late :

We storm at your ivory gate : Pale Kings of the
Sunset, beware !

Not on silk nor in samet we lie, not in curtained
solemnity die

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

Among women who chatter and cry, and children who mumble a prayer.
But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we rise with a shout, and we tramp
With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the spray of the wind in our hair.

From the lands where the elephants are, to the forts of Merou and Balghar,
Our steel we have brought and our star to shine on the ruins of Rum.
We have marched from the Indus to Spain, and by God we will go there again ;
We have stood on the shore of the plain where the Waters of Destiny boom.
A mart of destruction we made at Jalula where men were afraid,
For death was a difficult trade, and the sword was a broker of doom ;

And the Spear was a Desert Physician who cured not a few of ambition,
And drove not a few to perdition with medicine bitter and strong :
And the shield was a grief to the fool and as bright as a desolate pool,
And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when their cavalry thundered along :
For the coward was drowned with the brave when our battle sheered up like a wave,
And the dead to the desert we gave, and the glory to God in our song.

THE OLD SHIPS

I HAVE seen old ships sail like swans asleep
Beyond the village which men still call Tyre,
With leaden age o'ercargoed, dipping deep
For Famagusta and the hidden sun
That rings black Cyprus with a lake of fire ;
And all those ships were certainly so old
Who knows how oft with squat and noisy gun,
Questing brown slaves or Syrian oranges,
The pirate Genoese
Hell-raked them till they rolled
Blood, water, fruit and corpses up the hold.
But now through friendly seas they softly run,
Painted the mid-sea blue or shore-sea green,
Still patterned with the vine and grapes in gold.

But I have seen,
Pointing her shapely shadows from the dawn
And image tumbled on a rose-swept bay,
A drowsy ship of some yet older day ;
And, wonder's breath indrawn,
Thought I—who knows—who knows—but in that
same
(Fished up beyond Æaea, patched up new
—Stern painted brighter blue—)
That talkative, bald-headed seaman came
(Twelve patient comrades sweating at the oar)
From Troy's doom-crimson shore,
And with great lies about his wooden horse
Set the crew laughing, and forgot his course.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

It was so old a ship—who knows, who knows ?
—And yet so beautiful, I watched in vain
To see the mast burst open with a rose,
And the whole deck put on its leaves again.

STILLNESS

WHEN the words rustle no more,
 And the last work's done,
When the bolt lies deep in the door,
 And Fire, our Sun,
Falls on the dark-laned meadows of the floor ;

When from the clock's last chime to the next
 chime
 Silence beats his drum,
And Space with gaunt grey eyes and her brother
 Time
 Wheeling and whispering come,
She with the mould of form and he with the loom
 of rhyme :

Then twittering out in the night my thought-
 birds flee,
 I am emptied of all my dreams :
I only hear Earth turning, only see
 Ether's long bankless streams,
And only know I should drown if you laid not
 your hand on me.

AREIYA

THIS place was formed divine for love and us to
dwell ;

This house of brown stone built for us to sleep
therein ;

Those blossoms haunt the rocks that we should
see and smell ;

Those old rocks break the hill that we the
heights should win.

Those heights survey the sea that there our
thoughts should sail

Up the steep wall of wave to touch the Syrian
sky :

For us that sky at eve fades out of purple pale,
Pale as the mountain mists beneath our house
that lie.

In front of our small house are brown stone
arches three ;

Behind it, the low porch where all the jasmine
grows ;

Beyond it, red and green, the gay pomegranate
tree ;

Around it, like love's arms, the summer and
the rose.

Within it sat and wrote in minutes soft and few
This worst and best of songs, one who loves it,
and you.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

THE QUEEN'S SONG

HAD I the power
 To Midas given of old
To touch a flower
 And leave the petals gold
I then might touch thy face,
 Delightful boy,
And leave a metal grace,
 A graven joy.

Thus would I slay,—
 Ah, desperate device !
The vital day
 That trembles in thine eyes,
And let the red lips close
 Which sang so well,
And drive away the rose
 To leave a shell.

Then I myself,
 Rising austere and dumb
On the high shelf
 Of my half-lighted room,
Would place the shining bust
 And wait alone,
Until I was but dust,
 Buried unknown.

Thus in my love
 For nations yet unborn,
I would remove
 From our two lives the morn,

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

And muse on loveliness
In mine arm-chair,
Content should Time confess
How sweet you were.

BRUMANA

OH shall I never never be home again ?
Meadows of England shining in the rain
Spread wide your daisied lawns : your ramparts
green
With briar fortify, with blossom screen
Till my far morning—and O streams that slow
And pure and deep through plains and playlands
go,
For me your love and all your kingcups store,
And—dark militia of the southern shore,
Old fragrant friends—preserve me the best lines
Of that long saga which you sung me, pines,
When, lonely boy, beneath the chosen tree
I listened, with my eyes upon the sea.

O traitor pines, you sang what life has found
The falsest of fair tales.
Earth blew a far-horn prelude all around,
That native music of her forest home,
While from the sea's blue fields and syren dales
Shadows and light noon-spectres of the foam
Riding the summer gales
On aery viols plucked an idle sound.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

Hearing you sing, O trees,
Hearing you murmur, "There are older seas,
That beat on vaster sands,
Where the wise snailfish move their pearly towers
To carven rocks and sculptured promont'ries,"
Hearing you whisper, "Lands
Where blaze the unimaginable flowers."

Beneath me in the valley waves the palm,
Beneath, beyond the valley, breaks the sea ;
Beneath me sleep in mist and light and calm
Cities of Lebanon, dream-shadow-dim,
Where Kings of Tyre and Kings of Tyre did rule
In ancient days in endless dynasty,
And all around the snowy mountains swim
Like mighty swans afloat in heaven's pool.

But I will walk upon the wooded hill
Where stands a grove, O pines, of sister pines,
And when the downy twilight droops her wing
And no sea glimmers and no mountain shines
My heart shall listen still.
For pines are gossip pines the wide world through
And full of runic tales to sigh or sing.

Tis ever sweet through pine to see the sky
Mantling a deeper gold or darker blue.
"Tis ever sweet to lie
On the dry carpet of the needles brown,
And though the fanciful green lizard stir
And windy odours light as thistledown

J A M E S E L R O Y F L E C K E R

Breathe from the lavdanon and lavender,
Half to forget the wandering and pain,
Half to remember days that have gone by,
And dream and dream that I am home again !

HYALI

Στὸ Γυαλὶ, στὸ γαλάξιο βράχο

ISLAND in blue of summer floating on,
Little brave sister of the Sporades,
Hail and farewell ! I pass, and thou art gone,
So fast in fire the great boat beats the seas.

But slowly fade, soft Island ! Ah to know
Thy town and who the gossips of thy town,
What flowers flash in thy meadows, what winds
blow
Across thy mountain when the sun goes down.

There is thy market, where the fisher throws
His gleaming fish that gasp in the death-bright
dawn :
And there thy Prince's house, painted old rose,
Beyond the olives, crowns its slope of lawn.

And is thy Prince so rich that he displays
At festal board the flesh of sheep and kine ?
Or dare he—summer days are long hot days—
Load up with Asian snow his Coan wine ?

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

Behind a rock, thy harbour, whence a noise
 Of tarry sponge-boats hammered lustily :
And from that little rock thy naked boys
 Like burning arrows shower upon the sea.

And there by the old Greek chapel—there beneath
 A thousand poppies that each sea-wind stirs
And cyclamen, as honied and white as death,
 Dwell deep in earth the elder islanders.

* * *

Thy name I know not, Island, but *his* name
 I know, and why so proud thy mountain
stands,
And what thy happy secret, and Who came
 Drawing his painted galley up thy sands.

For my Gods—Trident Gods who deep and pale
 Swim in the Latmian Sound, have murmured
thus :

“ To such an island came with a pompous sail
 On his first voyage young Herodotus.”

Since then—tell me no tale how Romans built,
 Saracens plundered—or that bearded lords
Rowed by to fight for Venice, and here spilt
 Their blood across the bay that keeps their
swords.

That old Greek day was all thy history :
 For that did Ocean poise thee as a flower.
Farewell : this boat attends not such as thee :
 Farewell : I was thy lover for an hour !

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

Farewell ! But I who call upon thy caves
Am far like thee,—like thee, unknown and
poor.
And yet my words are music as thy waves,
And like thy rocks shall down through time
endure.

THE GOLDEN JOURNEY TO SAMARKAND

PROLOGUE

We who with songs beguile your pilgrimage
And swear that Beauty lives though lilies die,
We Poets of the proud old lineage
Who sing to find your hearts, we know not
why,—

What shall we tell you ? Tales, marvellous
tales
Of ships and stars and isles where good men
rest,
Where nevermore the rose of sunset pales,
And winds and shadows fall toward the West :

And there the world's first huge white-bearded
kings
In dim glades sleeping, murmur in their sleep,
And closer round their breasts the ivy clings,
Cutting its pathway slow and red and deep.

II

And how beguile you ? Death has no repose
Warmer and deeper than that Orient sand
Which hides the beauty and bright faith of those
Who made the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

And now they wait and whiten peaceably,
Those conquerors, those poets, those so fair :
They know time comes, not only you and I,
But the whole world shall whiten, here or there ;

When those long caravans that cross the plain
With dauntless feet and sound of silver bells
Put forth no more for glory or for gain,
Take no more solace from the palm-girt wells,

When the great markets by the sea shut fast
All that calm Sunday that goes on and on :
When even lovers find their peace at last,
And Earth is but a star, that once had shone.

EPILOGUE

At the Gate of the Sun, Bagdad, in olden time

THE MERCHANTS (*together*)

Away, for we are ready to a man !
Our camels sniff the evening and are glad.
Lead on, O Master of the Caravan :
Lead on the Merchant-Princes of Bagdad.

J A M E S E L R O Y F L E C K E R

THE CHIEF DRAPER

Have we not Indian carpets dark as wine,
Turbans and sashes, gowns and bows and veils,
And broderies of intricate design,
And printed hangings in enormous bales ?

THE CHIEF GROCER

We have rose-candy, we have spikenard,
Mastic and terebinth and oil and spice,
And such sweet jams meticulously jarred
As God's own Prophet eats in Paradise.

THE PRINCIPAL JEWS

And we have manuscripts in peacock styles
By Ali of Damascus ; we have swords
Engraved with storks and apes and crocodiles,
And heavy beaten necklaces, for Lords.

THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

But you are nothing but a lot of Jews.

THE PRINCIPAL JEWS

Sir, even dogs have daylight, and we pay.

THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

But who are ye in rags and rotten shoes,
You dirty-bearded, blocking up the way ?

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

THE PILGRIMS

We are the Pilgrims, master ; we shall go
 Always a little further : it may be
Beyond that last blue mountain barred with snow,
 Across that angry or that glimmering sea,
White on a throne or guarded in a cave
 There lives a prophet who can understand
Why men were born : but surely we are brave,
 Who make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

THE CHIEF MERCHANT

We gnaw the nail of hurry. Master, away !

ONE OF THE WOMEN

O turn your eyes to where your children stand.
Is not Bagdad the beautiful ? O stay !

THE MERCHANTS (*in chorus*)

We take the Golden Road to Samarkand.

AN OLD MAN

Have you not girls and garlands in your homes,
 Eunuchs and Syrian boys at your command ?
Seek not excess : God hateth him who roams !

THE MERCHANTS (*in chorus*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

A PILGRIM WITH A BEAUTIFUL VOICE

Sweet to ride forth at evening from the wells
When shadows pass gigantic on the sand,
And softly through the silence beat the bells
Along the Golden Road to Samarkand.

A MERCHANT

We travel not for trafficking alone :
By hotter winds our fiery hearts are fanned :
For lust of knowing what should not be known
We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

THE MASTER OF THE CARAVAN

Open the gate, O watchman of the night !

THE WATCHMAN

Ho, travellers, I open. For what land
Leave you the dim-moon city of delight ?

THE MERCHANTS (*with a shout*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

[*The Caravan passes through the gate*]

THE WATCHMAN (*consoling the women*)

What would ye, ladies ? It was ever thus.
Men are unwise and curiously planned.

J A M E S E L R O Y F L E C K E R

A WOMAN

They have their dreams, and do not think of us.

VOICES OF THE CARAVAN (*in the distance,
singing*)

We make the Golden Journey to Samarkand.

ROBIN FLOWER

LA VIE CÉRÉBRALE

I AM alone—alone ;
There is nothing—only I,
And, when I will to die,
All must be gone.

Eternal thought in me
Puts on the dress of time
And builds a stage to mime
Its listless tragedy.

And in that dress of time
And on that stage of space
I place, change, and replace
Life to a wilful rime.

I summon at my whim
All things that are, that were :
The high incredible air,
Where stars—my creatures—swim.

I dream, and from my mind
The dead, the living come ;
I build a marble Rome,
I give it to the wind.

R O B I N F L O W E R

Athens and Babylon
I breathe upon the night,
Troy towers for my delight
And crumbles stone by stone.

I change with white and green
The seasons hour by hour ;
I think—it is a flower,
Think—and the flower has been.

Men, women, things, a stream
That wavers and flows by,
A lonely dreamer, I
Build and cast down the dream.

And one day weary grown
Of all my brain has wrought,
I shall destroy my thought
And I and all be gone.

THE PIPES

WITH the spring awaken other springs,
Those swallows' wings are shadowed by other
wings
And another thrush behind that glad bird
sings.

R O B I N F L O W E R

A multitude are the flowers, but multitudes
Blossom and waver and breathe from forgotten
 woods,
And in silent places an older silence broods.

With the spring long-buried springs in my heart
 awaken,
Time takes the years, but the springs he has not
 taken,
My thoughts with a boy's wild thoughts are mixed
 and shaken.

And here amid inland fields by the down's green
 shoulder
I remember an ancient sea and mountains older,
Older than all but time, skies sterner and colder.

When the swift spring night on the sea and the
 mountains fell
In the hush of the solemn hills I remember well
The far pipes calling and the tale they had to tell.

Sad was the tale, ah ! sad beyond all saying
The lament of the lonely pipes in the evening
 playing
Lost in the glens, in the still, dark pines delaying.

And now with returning spring I remember all,
On southern fields those mountain shadows fall,
Those wandering pipes in the downland evening
 call.

SAY NOT THAT BEAUTY

SAY not that beauty is an idle thing
And gathered lightly as a wayside flower
That on the trembling verges of the spring
Knows but the sweet survival of an hour.
For 'tis not so. Through dedicated days
And foiled adventure of deliberate nights
We lose and find and stumble in the ways
That lead to the far confluence of delights.
Not with the earthly eye and fleshly ear,
But lifted far above mortality,
We see at last the eternal hills, and hear
The sighing of the universal sea ;
And kneeling breathless in the holy place
We know immortal Beauty face to face.

JOHN FREEMAN

THE WAKERS

THE joyous morning ran and kissed the grass
And drew his fingers through her sleeping hair,
And cried, " Before thy flowers are well awake
Rise, and the lingering darkness from thee shake.

" Before the daisy and the sorrel buy
Their brightness back from that close-folding
night,
Come, and the shadows from thy bosom shake,
Awake from thy thick sleep, awake, awake ! "

Then the grass of that mounded meadow stirred
Above the Roman bones that may not stir
Though joyous morning whispered, shouted,
sang :
The grass stirred as that happy music rang.

O, what a wondrous rustling everywhere !
The steady shadows shook and thinned and died,
The shining grass flashed brightness back for
brightness,
And sleep was gone, and there was heavenly
lightness.

As if she had found wings, light as the wind,
The grass flew, bent with the wind, from east to
west,

Chased by one wild grey cloud, and flashing all
Her dews for happiness to hear morning call . . .

But even as I stepped out the brightness dimmed,
I saw the fading edge of all delight.

The sober morning waked the drowsy herds,
And there was the old scolding of the birds.

THE BODY

WHEN I had dreamed and dreamed what woman's
beauty was,
And how that beauty seen from unseen surely
flowed,

I turned and dreamed again, but sleeping now
no more :

My eyes shut and my mind with inward vision
glowed.

"I did not think!" I cried, seeing that wavering
shape

That steadied and then wavered, as a cherry
bough in June

Lifts and falls in the wind—each fruit a fruit of
light;

And then she stood as clear as an unclouded
moon.

JOHN FREEMAN

As clear and still she stood, moonlike remotely
near;

I saw and heard her breathe, I years and years
away.

Her light streamed through the years, I saw her
clear and still,

Shape and spirit together mingling night with
day.

Water falling, falling with the curve of time
Over green-hued rock, then plunging to its pool
Far, far below, a falling spear of light;
Water falling golden from the sun but moon-
like cool :

Water has the curve of her shoulder and breast,
Water falls as straight as her body rose,
Water her brightness has from neck to still feet,
Water crystal-cold as her cold body flows.

But not water has the colour I saw when I
dreamed,

Nor water such strength has. I joyed to behold
How the blood lit her body with lamps of fire
And made the flesh glow that like water
gleamed cold.

A flame in her arms and in each finger flame,
And flame in her bosom, flame above, below,
The curve of climbing flame in her waist and her
thighs ;

From foot to head did flame into red flame flow.

JOHN FREEMAN

I knew how beauty seen from unseen must rise,
How the body's joy for more than body's use
was made.

I knew then how the body is the body of the mind,
And how the mind's own fire beneath the cool
skin played.

O shape that once to have seen is to see evermore,
Falling stream that falls to the deeps of the
mind,
Fire that once lit burns while aught burns in the
world,
Foot to head a flame moving in the spirit's
wind !

If these eyes could see what these eyes have not
seen—
The inward vision clear—how should I look for
joy,
Knowing that beauty's self rose visible in the
world
Over age that darkens, and griefs that destroy ?

STONE TREES

LAST night a sword-light in the sky
Flashed a swift terror on the dark.
In that sharp light the fields did lie
Naked and stone-like ; each tree stood

JOHN FREEMAN

Like a tranced woman, bound and stark.

Far off the wood
With darkness ridged the riven dark.

The cows astonished stared with fear,
And sheep crept to the knees of cows,
And conies to their burrows slid,
And rooks were still in rigid boughs,
And all things else were still or hid.

From all the wood
Came but the owl's hoot, ghostly, clear.

In that cold trance the earth was held
It seemed an age, or time was nought.
Sure never from that stone-like field
Sprang golden corn, nor from those chill
Gray granite trees was music wrought.

In all the wood
Even the tall poplar hung stone still.

It seemed an age, or time was none . . .
Slowly the earth heaved out of sleep
And shivered, and the trees of stone
Bent and sighed in the gusty wind,
And rain swept as birds flocking sweep.

Far off the wood
Rolled the slow thunders on the wind.

From all the wood came no brave bird,
No song broke through the close-fall'n night,
Nor any sound from cowering herd :

Only a dog's long lonely howl
When from the window poured pale light.
And from the wood
The hoot came ghostly of the owl.

MORE THAN SWEET

THE noisy fire,
The drumming wind,
The creaking trees,
And all that hum
Of summer air
And all the long inquietude
Of breaking seas—

Sweet and delightful are
In loneliness.
But more than these
The quiet light
From the morn's sun
And night's astonished moon,
Falling gently upon breaking seas.

Such quietness
Another beauty is—
Ah, and those stars
So gravely still
More than light, than beauty pour
Upon the strangeness
Of the heart's breaking seas.

WAKING

LYING beneath a hundred seas of sleep
With all those heavy waves flowing over me.
And I unconscious of the rolling night
Until, slowly, from deep to lesser deep
Risen, I felt the wandering seas no longer cover
me
But only air and light . . .

It was a sleep
So dark and so bewilderingly deep
That only death's were deeper or completer,
And none when I awoke stranger or sweeter.
Awake, the strangeness still hung over me
As I with far-strayed senses stared at the light.

I—and who was I ?
Saw—oh, with what unaccustomed eye !
The room was strange and everything was strange
Like a strange room entered by wild moonlight ;
And yet familiar as the light swept over me
And I rose from the night.

Strange—yet stranger I.
And as one climbs from water up to land
Fumbling for weedy steps with foot and hand,
So I for yesterdays whereon to climb
To this remote and new-struck isle of time.
But I found not myself nor yesterday—

Until, slowly, from deep to lesser deep
Risen, I felt the seas no longer over me
But only air and light.

Yes, like one clutching at a ring I heard
The household noises as they stirred,
And holding fast I wondered, What were they ?

I felt a strange hand lying at my side,
Limp and cool. I touched it and knew it mine.
A murmur, and I remembered how the wind
died

In the near aspens. Then
Strange things were no more strange.
I travelled among common thoughts again ;

And felt the new-forged links of that strong
chain
That binds me to myself, and this to-day
To yesterday. I heard it rattling near
With a no more astonished ear.
And I had lost the strangeness of that sleep,
No more the long night rolled its great seas over
me.

—O, too anxious I !
For in this press of things familiar
I have lost all that clung
Round me awaking of strangeness and such
sweetness.
Nothing now is strange
Except the man that woke and then was I.

THE CHAIR

THE chair was made
By hands long dead,
Polished by many bodies sitting there,
Until the wood-lines flowed as clean as waves.

Mine sat restless there,
Or propped to stare
Hugged the low kitchen with fond eyes
Or tired eyes that looked at nothing at all.

Or watched from the smoke rise
The flame's snake-eyes,
Up the black-bearded chimney leap ;
Then on my shoulder my dull head would drop.

And half asleep
I heard her creep—
Her never-singing lips shut fast,
Fearing to wake me by a careless breath.

Then, at last,
My lids upcast,
Our eyes met, I smiled and she smiled,
And I shut mine again and truly slept.

Was I that child
Fretful, sick, wild ?
Was that you moving soft and soft
Between the rooms if I but played at sleep ?

JOHN FREEMAN

Or if I laughed,
Talked, cried, or coughed,
You smiled too, just perceptibly,
Or your large kind brown eyes said, O poor boy !

From the fireside I
Could see the narrow sky
Through the barred heavy window panes,
Could hear the sparrows quarrelling round the
lilac ;

And hear the heavy rains
Choking in the roof-drains :—
Else of the world I nothing heard
Or nothing remember now. But most I loved

To watch when you stirred
Busily like a bird
At household doings ; with hands floured
Mixing a magic with your cakes and tarts.

O into me, sick, foward,
Yourself you poured ;
In all those days and weeks when I
Sat, slept, woke, whimpered, wondered and slept
again.

Now but a memory
To bless and harry me
Remains of you still swathed with care ;
Myself your chief care, sitting by the hearth

Propped in the pillow'd chair,
 Following you with tired stare,
 And my hand following the wood lines
 By dead hands smoothed and followed many years.

THE STARS IN THEIR COURSES

AND now, while the dark vast earth shakes and rocks

In this wild dream-like snare of mortal shocks,
 How look (I muse) those cold and solitary stars
 On these magnificent, cruel wars ?—
 Venus, that brushes with her shining lips
 (Surely !) the wakeful edge of the world and mocks
 With hers its all ungentele wantonness ?—
 Or the large moon (pricked by the spars of ships
 Creeping and creeping in their restlessness),
 The moon pouring strange light on things more
 strange,
 Looks she unheedfully on seas and lands
 Trembling with change and fear of counter-
 change ?

O, not earth trembles, but the stars, the stars !
 The sky is shaken and the cool air is quivering.
 I cannot look up to the crowded height
 And see the fair stars trembling in their light,
 For thinking of the starlike spirits of men
 Crowding the earth and with great passion
 quivering :—

Stars quenched in anger and hate, stars sick with
pity.

I cannot look up to the naked skies
Because a sorrow on dark midnight lies,
Death, on the living world of sense ;
Because on my own land a shadow lies
That may not rise ;
Because from bare grey hillside and rich city
Streams of uncomprehending sadness pour,
Thwarting the eager spirit's pure intelligence . . .
How look (I muse) those cold and solitary stars
On these magnificent, cruel wars ?

Stars trembled in broad heaven, faint with pity.
An hour to dawn I looked. Beside the trees
Wet mist shaped other trees that branching rose,
Covering the woods and putting out the stars.
There was no murmur on the seas,
No wind blew—only the wandering air that grows
With dawn, than murmurs, sighs,
And dies.
The mist climbed slowly, putting out the stars,
And the earth trembled when the stars were
gone ;
And moving strangely everywhere upon
The trembling earth, thickened the watery mist.

And for a time the holy things are veiled.
England's wise thoughts are swords ; her quiet
hours
Are trodden underfoot like wayside flowers,
And every English heart is England's wholly.

In starless night
A serious passion streams the heaven with light.
A common beating is in the air—
The heart of England throbbing everywhere.
And all her roads are nerves of noble thought,
And all her people's brain is but her brain ;
And all her history, less her shame,
Is part of her requickened consciousness.
Her courage rises clean again.

Even in victory there hides defeat ;
The spirit's murdered though the body survives,
Except the cause for which a people strives
Burn with no covetous, foul heat.
Fights she against herself who infamously draws
The sword against man's secret spiritual laws.
But thou, England, because a bitter heel
Hath sought to bruise the brain, the sensitive will,
The conscience of the world,
For this, England, art risen, and shalt fight
Purely through long profoundest night,
Making their quarrel thine who are grieved like
thee;
And (if to thee the stars yield victory)
Tempering their hate of the great foe that hurled
Vainly her strength against the conscience of the
world.

I looked again, or dreamed I looked, and saw
The stars again and all their peace again.
The moving mist had gone, and shining still
The moon went high and pale above the hill.

Not now those lights were trembling in the vast
Ways of the nervy heaven, nor trembled earth :
Profound and calm they gazed as the soft-shod
hours passed

And with less fear (not with less awe,
Remembering, England, all the blood and pain)
How look, I cried, you stern and solitary stars
On these disastrous wars !

August 1914.

SHADOWS

THE shadow of the lantern on the wall,
The lantern hanging from the twisted beam,
The eye that sees the lantern, shadow and all.

The crackle of the sinking fire in the grate,
The far train, the slow echo in the coombe,
The ear that hears fire, train and echo and all.

The loveliness that is the secret shape
Of once-seen, sweet and oft-dreamed loveliness,
The brain that builds shape, memory, dream and
all .

A white moon stares Time's thinning fabric
through,
And makes substantial insubstantial seem,
And shapes immortal mortal as a dream :
And eye and brain flicker as shadows do
Restlessly dancing on a cloudy wall.

ROBERT GRAVES

STAR-TALK

“ ARE you awake, Gemelli,
This frosty night ? ”

“ We'll be awake till reveillé,
Which is Sunrise,” say the Gemelli,
“ It's no good trying to go to sleep :
If there's wine to be got we'll drink it deep,
But rest is hopeless to-night,
But rest is hopeless to-night.”

“ Are you cold too, poor Pleiads,
This frosty night ? ”

“ Yes, and so are the Hyads :
See us cuddle and hug,” say the Pleiads,
“ All six in a ring : it keeps us warm :
We huddle together like birds in a storm :
It's bitter weather to-night,
It's bitter weather to-night.”

“ What do you hunt, Orion,
This starry night ? ”

“ The Ram, the Bull and the Lion
And the Great Bear,” says Orion,
“ With my starry quiver and beautiful belt
I am trying to find a good thick pelt
To warm my shoulders to-night,
To warm my shoulders to-night.”

ROBERT GRAVES

“ Did you hear that, Great She-bear,
This frosty night ? ”
“ Yes, he’s talking of stripping *me* bare
Of my own big fur,” says the She-bear.
“ I’m afraid of the man and his terrible arrow :
The thought of it chills my bones to the
marrow,
And the frost so cruel to-night !
And the frost so cruel to-night ! ”

“ How is your trade, Aquarius,
This frosty night ? ”
“ Complaints is many and various
And my feet are cold,” says Aquarius,
“ There’s Venus objects to Dolphin-scales,
And Mars to Crab-spawn found in my pails,
And the pump has frozen to-night,
And the pump has frozen to-night.”

TO LUCASTA ON GOING TO THE WARS—
FOR THE FOURTH TIME

It doesn’t matter what’s the cause,
What wrong they say we’re righting,
A curse for treaties, bonds and laws,
When we’re to do the fighting !
And since we lads are proud and true,
What else remains to do ?

ROBERT GRAVES

Lucasta, when to France your man
Returns his fourth time, hating war,
Yet laughs as calmly as he can
 And flings an oath, but says no more,
That is not courage, that's not fear—
Lucasta he is Fusilier,
 And his pride sends him here.

Let statesmen bluster, bark and bray
 And so decide who started
This bloody war, and who's to pay,
 But he must be stout-hearted,
Must sit and stake with quiet breath,
 Playing at cards with Death.

Don't plume yourself he fights for you ;
It is no courage, love or hate
That lets us do the things we do ;
 It's pride that makes the heart so great ;
It is not anger, no, nor fear—
Lucasta he's a Fusilier,
 And his pride keeps him here.

NOT DEAD

WALKING through trees to cool my heat and pain,
I know that David's with me here again.
All that is simple, happy, strong, he is.
Caressingly I stroke
Rough bark of the friendly oak.
A brook goes bubbling by : the voice is his.

Turf burns with pleasant smoke ;
 I laugh at chaffinch and at primroses.
 All that is simple, happy, strong, he is.
 Over the whole wood in a little while
 Breaks his slow smile.

IN THE WILDERNESS

CHRIST of his gentleness
 Thirsting and hungering,
 Walked in the wilderness ;
 Soft words of grace He spoke
 Unto lost desert-folk
 That listened wondering.
 He heard the bittern's call
 From ruined palace wall,
 Answered them brotherly.
 He held communion
 With the she-pelican
 Of lonely piety.
 Basilisk, cockatrice,
 Flocked to His homilies,
 With mail of dread device,
 With monstrous barbèd stings,
 With eager dragon-eyes ;
 Great rats on leather wings
 And poor blind broken things,
 Foul in their miseries.
 And ever with Him went,
 Of all His wanderings
 Comrade, with ragged coat,

ROBERT GRAVES

Gaunt ribs—poor innocent—
Bleeding foot, burning throat,
The guileless old scape-goat ;
For forty nights and days
Followed in Jesus' ways,
Sure guard behind Him kept,
Tears like a lover wept.

NEGLECTFUL EDWARD

Nancy

EDWARD back from the Indian Sea,
“ What have you brought for Nancy ? ”

Edward

“ A rope of pearls and a gold earring,
And a bird of the East that will not sing.
A carven tooth, a box with a key——”

Nancy

“ God be praised you are back,” says she,
“ Have you nothing more for your Nancy ? ”

Edward

“ Long as I sailed the Indian Sea
I gathered all for your fancy :
Toys and silk and jewels I bring,
And a bird of the East that will not sing :
What more can you want, dear girl, from me ? ”

Nancy

"God be praised you are back," said she,
"Have you nothing better for Nancy?"

Edward

"Safe and home from the Indian Sea
And nothing to take your fancy?"

Nancy

"You can keep your pearls and your gold earring,
And your bird of the East that will not sing,
But, Ned, have you *nothing* more for me
Than heathenish gew-gaw toys?" says she,
"Have you nothing better for Nancy?"

Nancy

“ God be praised you are back,” said she,
“ Have you nothing better for Nancy ? ”

Edward

“ Safe and home from the Indian Sea
And nothing to take your fancy ? ”

Nancy

“ You can keep your pearls and your gold ear-
ring,
And your bird of the East that will not sing,
But, Ned, have you *nothing* more for me
Than heathenish gew-gaw toys ? ” says she,
“ Have you nothing better for Nancy ? ”

JULIAN GRENFELL

TO A BLACK GREYHOUND

SHINING black in the shining light,
Inky black in the golden sun,
Graceful as the swallow's flight,
Light as swallow, winged one,
Swift as driven hurricane,
Double-sinewed stretch and spring,
Muffled thud of flying feet—
See the black dog galloping,
Hear his wild foot-beat.

See him lie when the day is dead,
Black curves curled on the boarded floor.
Sleepy eyes, my sleepy-head—
Eyes that were aflame before.
Gentle now, they burn no more ;
Gentle now and softly warm,
With the fire that made them bright
Hidden—as when after storm
Softly falls the night.

INTO BATTLE

THE naked earth is warm with Spring,
And with green grass and bursting trees
Leans to the sun's gaze glorying,
And quivers in the sunny breeze ;

JULIAN GRENFELL

And Life is Colour and Warmth and Light,
 And a striving evermore for these ;
And he is dead who will not fight ;
 And who dies fighting has increase.

The fighting man shall from the sun
 Take warmth, and life from the glowing earth ;
Speed with the light-foot winds to run,
 And with the trees to newer birth ;
And find, when fighting shall be done,
 Great rest, and fullness after dearth.

All the bright company of Heaven
 Hold him in their high comradeship,
The Dog-Star and the Sisters Seven,
 Orion's Belt and sworded hip.

The woodland trees that stand together,
 They stand to him each one a friend,
They gently speak in the windy weather ;
 They guide to valley and ridges' end.

The kestrel hovering by day,
 And the little owls that call by night,
Bid him be swift and keen as they,
 As keen of ear, as swift of sight.

The blackbird sings to him, " Brother, brother,
 If this be the last song you shall sing
Sing well, for you may not sing another ;
 Brother, sing."

J U L I A N G R E N F E L L

In dreary, doubtful, waiting hours,
Before the brazen frenzy starts,
The horses show him nobler powers ;
O patient eyes, courageous hearts !

And when the burning moment breaks,
And all things else are out of mind,
And only Joy of Battle takes
Him by the throat, and makes him blind—

Through joy and blindness he shall know,
Not caring much to know, that still,
Nor lead nor steel shall reach him, so
That it be not the Destined Will.

The thundering line of battle stands,
And in the air Death moans and sings ;
But Day shall clasp him with strong hands,
And Night shall fold him in soft wings.

IVOR GURNEY

TO THE POET BEFORE BATTLE

Now, youth, the hour of thy dread passion comes
Thy lovely things must all be laid away ;
And thou, as others, must face the riven day
Unstirred by rattle of the rolling drums,
Or bugles' strident cry. When mere noise numbs
The sense of being, the fear-sick soul doth sway,
Remember thy great craft's honour, that they may
say

Nothing in shame of poets. Then the crumbs
Of praise the little versemen joyed to take
Shall be forgotten : then they must know we are
For all our skill in words, equal in might
And strong of mettle as those we honoured ; mak
The name of poet terrible in just war,
And like a crown of honour upon the fight.

SONG OF PAIN AND BEAUTY

To M. M. S.

O MAY these days of pain,
These wasted-seeming days,
Somewhere reflower again
With scent and savour of praise,

I V O R G U R N E Y

Draw out of memory all bitterness
Of night with Thy sun's rays.

And strengthen Thou in me
The love of men here found,
And eager charity,
That, out of difficult ground,
Spring like flowers in barren deserts, or
Like light, or a lovely sound.

A simpler heart than mine
Might have seen beauty clear
When I could see no sign
Of Thee, but only fear.
Strengthen me, make me to see
Thy beauty always
In every happening here.

In Trenches, March 1917.

R A L P H H O D G S O N

EVE

EVE, with her basket, was
Deep in the bells and grass,
Wading in bells and grass
Up to her knees,
Picking a dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Down in the bells and grass
Under the trees.

Mute as a mouse in a
Corner the cobra lay,
Curled round a bough of the
Cinnamon tall . . .
Now to get even and
Humble proud heaven and
Now was the moment or
Never at all.

“ Eva ! ” Each syllable
Light as a flower fell,
“ Eva ! ” he whispered the
Wondering maid,
Soft as a bubble sung
Out of a linnet’s lung,
Soft and most silvery
“ Eva ! ” he said.

R A L P H H O D G S O N

Picture that orchard sprite,
Eve, with her body white,
Supple and smooth to her
Slim finger tips,
Wondering, listening,
Listening, wondering,
Eve with a berry
Half way to her lips.

Oh had our simple Eve
Seen through the make-believe !
Had she but known the
Pretender he was !
Out of the boughs he came
Whispering still her name
Tumbling in twenty rings
Into the grass.

Here was the strangest pair
In the world anywhere ;
Eve in the bells and grass
Kneeling, and he
Telling his story low . . .
Singing birds saw them go
Down the dark path to
The Blasphemous Tree.

Oh what a clatter when
Titmouse and Jenny Wren
Saw him successful and
Taking his leave !

R A L P H H O D G S O N

How the birds rated him,
How they all hated him !
How they all pitied
Poor motherless Eve !

Picture her crying
Outside in the lane,
Eve, with no dish of sweet
Berries and plums to eat,
Haunting the gate of the
Orchard in vain . . .
Picture the lewd delight
Under the hill to-night—
“Eva !” the toast goes round,
“Eva !” again.

THE BULL

SEE an old unhappy bull,
Sick in soul and body both,
Slouching in the undergrowth
Of the forest beautiful,
Banished from the herd he led,
Bulls and cows a thousand head.

Cranes and gaudy parrots go
Up and down the burning sky ;
Tree-top cats purr drowsily
In the dim-day green below ;
And troops of monkeys, nutting, some,
All disputing, go and come ;

And things abominable sit
Picking offal buck or swine,
On the mess and over it
Burnished flies and beetles shine,
And spiders big as bladders lie
Under hemlocks ten foot high ;

And a dotted serpent curled
Round and round and round a tree,
Yellowing its greenery,
Keeps a watch on all the world,
All the world and this old bull
In the forest beautiful.

Bravely by his fall he came :
One he led, a bull of blood
Newly come to lustihood,
Fought and put his prince to shame,
Snuffed and pawed the prostrate head
Tameless even while it bled.

There they left him, every one,
Left him there without a lick,
Left him for the birds to pick,
Left him there for carrion,
Vilely from their bosom cast
Wisdom, worth and love at last.

When the lion left his lair
And roared his beauty through the hills,
And the vultures pecked their quills
And flew into the middle air,

R A L P H H O D G S O N

Then this prince no more to reign
Came to life and lived again.

He snuffed the herd in far retreat,
He saw the blood upon the ground,
And snuffed the burning airs around
Still with beevish odours sweet,
While the blood ran down his head
And his mouth ran slaver red.

Pity him, this fallen chief,
All his splendour, all his strength,
All his body's breadth and length
Dwindled down with shame and grief,
Half the bull he was before,
Bones and leather, nothing more.

See him standing dewlap-deep
In the rushes at the lake,
Surly, stupid, half asleep,
Waiting for his heart to break
And the birds to join the flies
Feasting at his bloodshot eyes,—

Standing with his head hung down
In a stupor, dreaming things :
Green savannas, jungles brown,
Battlefields and bellowings,
Bulls undone and lions dead
And vultures flapping overhead.

Dreaming things : of days he spent
With his mother gaunt and lean

In the valley warm and green,
Full of baby wonderment,
Blinking out of silly eyes
At a hundred mysteries ;

Dreaming over once again
How he wandered with a throng
Of bulls and cows a thousand strong,
Wandered on from plain to plain,
Up the hill and down the dale,
Always at his mother's tail ;

How he lagged behind the herd,
Lagged and tottered, weak of limb,
And she turned and ran to him
Blaring at the loathly bird
Stationed always in the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming maybe of a day
When her drained and drying paps
Turned him to the sweets and saps,
Richer fountains by the way,
And she left the bull she bore
And he looked to her no more ;

And his little frame grew stout,
And his little legs grew strong,
And the way was not so long ;
And his little horns came out,
And he played at butting trees
And boulder-stones and tortoises,

R A L P H H O D G S O N

Joined a game of knobby skulls
With the youngsters of his year,
All the other little bulls,
Learning both to bruise and bear,
Learning how to stand a shock
Like a little bull of rock.

Dreaming of a day less dim,
Dreaming of a time less far,
When the faint but certain star
Of destiny burned clear for him,
And a fierce and wild unrest
Broke the quiet of his breast.

And the gristles of his youth
Hardened in his comely pow,
And he came to fighting growth,
Beat his bull and won his cow,
And flew his tail and trampled off
Past the tallest, vain enough,

And curved about in splendour full
And curved again and snuffed the airs
As who should say Come out who dares !
And all beheld a bull, a Bull,
And knew that here was surely one
That backed for no bull, fearing none.

And the leader of the herd
Looked and saw, and beat the ground,
And shook the forest with his sound,
Bellowed at the loathly bird

Stationed always in the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

Dreaming, this old bull forlorn,
Surely dreaming of the hour
When he came to sultan power,
And they owned him master-horn,
Chiefest bull of all among
Bulls and cows a thousand strong.

And in all the tramping herd
Not a bull that barred his way,
Not a cow that said him nay,
Not a bull or cow that erred
In the furnace of his look
Dared a second, worse rebuke ;

Not in all the forest wide,
Jungle, thicket, pasture, fen,
Not another dared him then,
Dared him and again defied ;
Not a sovereign buck or boar
Came a second time for more.

Not a serpent that survived
Once the terrors of his hoof
Risked a second time reproof,
Came a second time and lived,
Not a serpent in its skin
Came again for discipline ;

Not a leopard bright as flame,
Flashing fingerhooks of steel,

R A L P H H O D G S O N

That a wooden tree might feel,
Met his fury once and came
For a second reprimand,
Not a leopard in the land.

Not a lion of them all
Not a lion of the hills,
Hero of a thousand kills,
Dared a second fight and fall,
Dared that ram terrific twice,
Paid a second time the price. . . .

Pity him, this dupe of dream,
Leader of the herd again
Only in his daft old brain,
Once again the bull supreme
And bull enough to bear the part
Only in his tameless heart.

Pity him that he must wake ;
Even now the swarm of flies
Blackening his bloodshot eyes
Bursts and blusters round the lake,
Scattered from the feast half-fed,
By great shadows overhead.

And the dreamer turns away
From his visionary herds
And his splendid yesterday,
Turns to meet the loathly birds
Flocking round him from the skies,
Waiting for the flesh that dies.

THE SONG OF HONOUR

I CLIMBED a hill as light fell short,
 And rooks came home in scramble sort,
 And filled the trees and flapped and fought
 And sang themselves to sleep ;
 An owl from nowhere with no sound
 Swung by and soon was nowhere found,
 I heard him calling half-way round,
 Holloing loud and deep ;
 A pair of stars, faint pins of light,
 Then many a star, sailed into sight,
 And all the stars, the flower of night,
 Were round me at a leap ;
 To tell how still the valleys lay
 I heard a watchdog miles away . . .
 And bells of distant sheep.

I heard no more of bird or bell,
 The mastiff in a slumber fell,
 I stared into the sky.
 As wondering men have always done,
 Since beauty and the stars were one,
 Though none so hard as I.

It seemed, so still the valleys were,
 As if the whole world knelt at prayer,
 Save me and me alone ;
 So pure and wide that silence was
 I feared to bend a blade of grass,
 And there I stood like stone.

There, sharp and sudden, there I heard—
Ah! some wild lovesick singing bird
Woke singing in the trees?
The nightingale and babble-wren
Were in the English greenwood then,
And you heard one of these?

The babble-wren and nightingale
Sang in the Abyssinian vale
That season of the year!
Yet, true enough, I heard them plain,
I heard them both again, again,
As sharp and sweet and clear
As if the Abyssinian tree
Had thrust a bough across the sea,
Had thrust a bough across to me
With music for my ear!

I heard them both, and oh! I heard
The song of every singing bird
That sings beneath the sky,
And with the song of lark and wren
The song of mountains, moths and men
And seas and rainbows vie!

I heard the universal choir
The Sons of Light exalt their Sire
With universal song,
Earth's lowliest and loudest notes,
Her million times ten million throats

Exalt Him loud and long,
 And lips and lungs and tongues of Grace
 From every part and every place
 Within the shining of His face
 The universal throng.

I heard the hymn of being sound
 From every well of honour found
 In human sense and soul :
 The song of poets when they write
 The testament of Beautysprite
 Upon a flying scroll,
 The song of painters when they take
 A burning brush for Beauty's sake
 And limn her features whole—

The song of men divinely wise
 Who look and see in starry skies
 Not stars so much as robins' eyes,
 And when these pale away
 Hear flocks of shiny pleiades
 Among the plums and apple trees
 Sing in the summer day—
 The song of all both high and low
 To some blest vision true,
 The song of beggars when they throw
 The crust of pity all men owe
 To hungry sparrows in the snow,
 Old beggars hungry too—
 The song of kings of kingdoms when
 They rise above their fortune men,
 And crown themselves anew,—

The song of courage, heart and will
 And gladness in a fight,
 Of men who face a hopeless hill
 With sparking and delight,
 The bells and bells of song that ring
 Round banners of a cause or king
 From armies bleeding white—

The songs of sailors every one
 When monstrous tide and tempest run
 At ships like bulls at red,
 When stately ships are twirled and spun
 Like whipping-tops and help there's none
 And mighty ships ten thousand ton
 Go down like lumps of lead—

And songs of fighters stern as they
 At odds with fortune night and day,
 Crammed up in cities grim and grey
 As thick as bees in hives,
 Hosannas of a lowly throng
 Who sing unconscious of their song,
 Whose lips are in their lives—

And song of some at holy war
 With spells and ghouls more dread by far
 Than deadly seas and cities are,
 Or hordes of quarrelling kings—
 The song of fighters great and small,
 The song of pretty fighters all,
 And high heroic things—

The song of lovers—who knows how
 Twitched up from place and time
 Upon a sigh, a blush, a vow,
 A curve or hue of cheek or brow,
 Borne up and off from here and now
 Into the void sublime !

And crying loves and passions still
 In every key from soft to shrill
 And numbers never done,
 Dog-loyalties to faith and friend,
 And loves like Ruth's of old no end,
 And intermission none—

And burst on burst for beauty and
 For numbers not behind,
 From men whose love of motherland
 Is like a dog's for one dear hand,
 Sole, selfless, boundless, blind—
 And song of some with hearts beside
 For men and sorrows far and wide,
 Who watch the world with pity and pride
 And warm to all mankind—

And endless joyous music rise
 From children at their play,
 And endless soaring lullabies
 From happy, happy mother's eyes,
 And answering crows and baby cries,
 How many who shall say !

And many a song as wondrous well
With pangs and sweets intolerable
From lonely hearths too gray to tell,
God knows how utter gray !

And song from many a house of care
When pain has forced a footing there
And there's a Darkness on the stair
Will not be turned away—

And song—that song whose singers come
With old kind tales of pity from
The Great Compassion's lips,
That makes the bells of Heaven to peal
Round pillows frosty with the feel
Of Death's cold finger tips—

The song of men all sorts and kinds,
As many tempers, moods and minds
As leaves are on a tree,
As many faiths and castes and creeds,
As many human bloods and breeds
As in the world may be ;

The song of each and all who gaze
On Beauty in her naked blaze,
Or see her dimly in a haze,
Or get her light in fitful rays
And tiniest needles even,
The song of all not wholly dark,
Not wholly sunk in stupor stark
Too deep for groping Heaven—

And alleluias sweet and clear
 And wild with beauty men mishear,
 From choirs of song as near and dear
 To Paradise as they,
 The everlasting pipe and flute
 Of wind and sea and bird and brute,
 And lips deaf men imagine mute
 In wood and stone and clay ;

The music of a lion strong
 That shakes a hill a whole night long,
 A hill as loud as he,
 The twitter of a mouse among
 Melodious greenery,
 The ruby's and the rainbow's song,
 The nightingale's—all three,
 The song of life that wells and flows
 From every leopard, lark and rose
 And everything that gleams or goes
 Lack-lustre in the sea.

I heard it all, each, every note
 Of every lung and tongue and throat,
 Ay, every rhythm and rhyme
 Of everything that lives and loves
 And upward, ever upward moves
 From lowly to sublime !

Earth's multitudinous Sons of Light,
 I heard them lift their lyric might
 With each and every chanting sprite
 That lit the sky that wondrous night
 As far as eye could climb !

I heard it all, I heard the whole
Harmonious hymn of being roll
Up through the chapel of my soul
And at the altar die,
And in the awful quiet then
Myself I heard Amen, Amen,
Amen I heard me cry !
I heard it all, and then although
I caught my flying senses, oh,
A dizzy man was I !
I stood and stared ; the sky was lit,
The sky was stars all over it,
I stood, I knew not why,
Without a wish, without a will,
I stood upon that silent hill
And stared into the sky until
My eyes were blind with stars and still
I stared into the sky.

REASON HAS MOONS

REASON has moons, but moons not hers
Lie mirror'd on her sea,
Confounding her astronomers,
But, O ! delighting me.

JAMES JOYCE

STRINGS IN THE EARTH

STRINGS in the earth and air
 Make music sweet ;
Strings by the river where
 The willows meet.

There's music along the river
 For Love wanders there,
Pale flowers on his mantle,
 Dark leaves on his hair.

All softly playing,
 With head to the music bent,
And fingers straying
 Upon an instrument.

I HEAR AN ARMY

I HEAR an army charging upon the land,
 And the thunder of horses plunging, foam about
 their knees :
Arrogant, in black armour, behind them stand,
 Disdaining the reins, with fluttering whips, the
 charioteers.

J A M E S J O Y C E

They cry unto the night their battle-name :
I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling
laughter.
They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding
flame,
Clanging, clanging upon the heart as upon an
anvil.

They come shaking in triumph their long green
hair :
They come out of the sea and run shouting by
the shore.
My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair ?
My love, my love, my love, why have you left
me alone ?

D. H. LAWRENCE

SERVICE OF ALL THE DEAD

BETWEEN the avenues of cypresses,
All in their scarlet cloaks, and surplices
Of linen, go the chaunting choristers,
The priests in gold and black, the villagers.

And all along the path to the cemetery
The round, dark heads of men crowd silently,
And black-scarved faces of women-folk, wistfully
Watch at the banner of death, and the mystery.

And at the foot of a grave a father stands
With sunken head, and forgotten, folded hands ;
And at the foot of a grave a woman kneels
With pale shut face, and neither hears nor feels

The coming of the chaunting choristers
Between the avenues of cypresses,
The silence of the many villagers,
The candle-flames beside the surplices.

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE

IN FRANCE

THE silence of maternal hills
Is round me in my evening dreams ;
And round me music-making rills
And mingling waves of pastoral streams

Whatever way I turn I find
The path is old unto me still.
The hills of home are in my mind,
And there I wander as I will.

February 3rd, 1917.

THOMAS MACDONAGH

HE shall not hear the bittern cry
In the wild sky, where he is lain,
Nor voices of the sweeter birds
Above the wailing of the rain.

Nor shall he know when loud March blow
Thro' slanting snows her fanfare shrill,
Blowing to flame the golden cup
Of many an upset daffodil.

F R A N C I S L E D W I D G E

But when the Dark Cow leaves the moor,
And pastures poor with greedy weeds,
Perhaps he'll hear her low at morn
Lifting her horn in pleasant meads.

IN SEPTEMBER

STILL are the meadowlands, and still
Ripens the upland corn,
And over the brown gradual hill
The moon has dipped a horn.

The voices of the dear unknown
With silent hearts now call,
My rose of youth is overblown
And trembles to the fall.

My song forsakes me like the birds
That leave the rain and grey,
I hear the music of the words
My lute can never say.

ROSE MACAULAY

TRINITY SUNDAY

As I walked in Petty Cury on Trinity Day,
While the cuckoos in the field did shout,
Right through the city stole the breath of the
may,
And the scarlet doctors all about

Lifted up their heads to snuff at the breeze,
And forgot they were bound for great St.
Mary's
To listen to a sermon from the Master of Caius,
And "How balmy," they said, "the air is!"

And balmy it was; and the sweet bells rocking
Shook it till it rent in two
And fell, a torn veil; and like maniacs mocking
The wild things from without passed through.

Wild wet things that swam in King's Parade
The days it was a marshy fen,
Through the rent veil they did sprawl and wade
Blind bog-beasts and Ugrian men.

And the city was not. (For cities are wrought
Of the stuff of the world's live brain.
Cities are thin veils, woven of thought,
And thought, breaking, rends them in twain.)

R O S E M A C A U L A Y

And the fens were not. (For fens are dreams
Dreamt by a race long dead ;
And the earth is naught, and the sun but seems :
And so those who know have said.)

So veil beyond veil illimitably lifted :
And I saw the world's naked face,
Before, reeling and baffled and blind, I drifted
Back within the bounds of space.

* * *

I have forgot the unforgettable.
All of honey and milk the air is.
God send I do forget. . . . The merry winds
swell
In the scarlet gowns bound for St. Mary's.

THOMAS MACDONAGH

INSCRIPTION ON A RUIN

I STOOD beside the postern here,
High up above the trampling sea,
In shadow, shrinking from the spear
Of light, not daring hence to flee.

The moon beyond the western cliff
Had passed, and let the shadow fall,
Across the water to the skiff
That came on to the castle wall.

I heard below murmur of words
Not loud, the splash upon the strand,
And the long cry of darkling birds.
The ivory horn fell from my hand.

THE NIGHT HUNT

IN the morning, in the dark,
When the stars begin to blunt,
By the wall of Barna Park
Dogs I heard and saw them hunt ;
All the parish dogs were there,
All the dogs for miles around,
Teeming up behind a hare,
In the dark, without a sound.

How I heard I scarce can tell—
 'Twas a patter in the grass—
 And I did not see them well
 Come across the dark and pass ;
 Yet I saw them and I knew
 Spearman's dog and Spellman's dog
 And, beside my own dog too,
 Leamy's from the Island Bog.

In the morning when the sun
 Burnished all the green to gorse,
 I went out to take a run
 Round the bog upon my horse ;
 And my dog that had been sleeping
 In the heat beside the door
 Left his yawning and went leaping
 On a hundred yards before.

Through the village street we passed—
 Not a dog there raised a snout—
 Through the street and out at last
 On the white bog road and out
 Over Barna Park full pace,
 Over to the silver stream,
 Horse and dog in happy race,
 Rider between thought and dream.

By the stream, at Leamy's house,
 Lay a dog—my pace I curbed—
 But our coming did not rouse
 Him from drowsing undisturbed ;

T H O M A S M A C D O N A G H

And my dog, as unaware
Of the other, dropped beside
And went running by me there
With my horse's slackened stride.

Yet by something, by a twitch
Of the sleeper's eye, a look
From the runner, something which
Little chords of feeling shook,
I was conscious that a thought
Shuddered through the silent deep
Of a secret—I had caught
Something I had known in sleep.

JOHN MASEFIELD

C. L. M.

In the dark womb where I began
My mother's life made me a man.
Through all the months of human birth
Her beauty fed my common earth.
I cannot see, nor breathe, nor stir,
But through the death of some of her.

Down in the darkness of the grave
She cannot see the life she gave.
For all her love, she cannot tell
Whether I use it ill or well,
Nor knock at dusty doors to find
Her beauty dusty in the mind.

If the grave's gates could be undone,
She would not know her little son,
I am so grown. If we should meet
She would pass by me in the street,
Unless my soul's face let her see
My sense of what she did for me.

What have I done to keep in mind
My debt to her and womankind ?
What woman's happier life repays
Her for those months of wretched days ?
For all my mouthless body leeched
Ere Birth's releasing hell was reached ?

What have I done, or tried, or said
 In thanks to that dear woman dead ?
 Men triumph over women still,
 Men trample women's rights at will,
 And man's lust roves the world untamed.

* * *

O grave, keep shut lest I be shamed.

WHAT AM I, LIFE ?

WHAT am I, Life ? A thing of watery salt
 Held in cohesion by unresting cells
 Which work they know not why, which never
 halt,
 Myself unwitting where their master dwells.
 I do not bid them, yet they toil, they spin ;
 A world which uses me as I use them,
 Nor do I know which end or which begin,
 Nor which to praise, which pamper, which con-
 demn.
 So, like a marvel in a marvel set,
 I answer to the vast, as wave by wave
 The sea of air goes over, dry or wet,
 Or the full moon comes swimming from her cave,
 Or the great sun comes north, this myriad I
 Tingles, not knowing how, yet wondering why.

Pleasantly seated—so we sink
 Into a torpor on the brink
 Of thought, or read our books, and understand
 Half them and half the backward-gliding land :
 (Trees in a dance all twirling round ;
 Large rivers flowing with no sound ;
 The scattered images of town and field,
 Shining flowers half concealed.)
 And, having settled to an equal rate,
 They swing the curve and straighten to the
 straight,
 Curtail their stride and gather up their joints,
 Snort, dwindle their steam for the noisy points,
 Leap them in safety, and, the other side,
 Loop again to an even stride.

The long train moves : we move in it along.
 Like an old ballad, or an endless song,
 It drones and wimbles its unwearied croon—
 Croons, drones, and mumbles all the afternoon.

Towns with their fifty chimneys close and high,
 Wreathed in great smoke between the earth and
 sky,
 It hurtles through them, and you think it must
 Halt—but it shrieks and sputters them with dust,
 Cracks like a bullet through their big affairs,
 Rushes the station-bridge, and disappears
 Out to the suburb, laying bare
 Each garden trimmed with pitiful care ;
 Children are caught at idle play,
 Held a moment, and thrown away.

Nearly everyone looks round.
Some dignified inhabitant is found
Right in the middle of the commonplace—
Buttoning his trousers, or washing his face.

III

Oh the wild engine ! Every time I sit
In any train I must remember it.
The way it smashes through the air ; its great
Petulant majesty and terrible rate :
Driving the ground before it, with those round
Feet pounding, eating, covering the ground ;
The piston using up the white steam so
You cannot watch it when it come or go ;
The cutting, the embankment ; how it takes
The tunnels, and the clatter that it makes ;
So careful of the train and of the track,
Guiding us out, or helping us go back ;
Breasting its destination : at the close
Yawning, and slowly dropping to a doze.

IV

We who have looked each other in the eyes
This journey long, and trundled with the train,
Now to our separate purposes must rise,
Becoming decent strangers once again.
The little chamber we have made our home
In which we so conveniently abode,
The complicated journey we have come,
Must be an unremembered episode.

Our common purpose made us all like friends.
 How suddenly it ends !
 A nod, a murmur, or a little smile,
 Or often nothing, and away we file.
 I hate to leave you, comrades. I will stay
 To watch you drift apart and pass away.
 It seems impossible to go and meet
 All those strange eyes of people in the street.
 But, like some proud unconscious god, the train
 Gathers us up and scatters us again.

SOLITUDE

WHEN you have tidied all things for the night,
 And while your thoughts are fading to their sleep,
 You'll pause a moment in the late firelight,
 Too sorrowful to weep.

The large and gentle furniture has stood
 In sympathetic silence all the day
 With that old kindness of domestic wood ;
 Nevertheless the haunted room will say :
 " Some one must be away."

The little dog rolls over half awake,
 Stretches his paws, yawns, looking up at you,
 Wags his tail very slightly for your sake,
 That you may feel he is unhappy too.

A distant engine whistles, or the floor
 Creaks, or the wandering night-wind bangs a door

Silence is scattered like a broken glass.
The minutes prick their ears and run about,
Then one by one subside again and pass
Sedately in, monotonously out.

You bend your head and wipe away a tear.
Solitude walks one heavy step more near.

MILK FOR THE CAT

WHEN the tea is brought at five o'clock,
And all the neat curtains are drawn with care,
The little black cat with bright green eyes
Is suddenly purring there.

At first she pretends, having nothing to do,
She has come in merely to blink by the grate,
But, though tea may be late or the milk may be
sour,
She is never late.

And presently her agate eyes
Take a soft large milky haze,
And her independent casual glance
Becomes a stiff, hard gaze.

Then she stamps her claws or lifts her ears,
Or twists her tail and begins to stir,
Till suddenly all her lithe body becomes
One breathing, trembling purr.

The children eat and wriggle and laugh ;
The two old ladies stroke their silk :
But the cat is grown small and thin with desire,
Transformed to a creeping lust for milk :

The white saucer like some full moon descends
At last from the clouds of the table above ;
She sighs and dreams and thrills and glows,
Transfigured with love.

She nestles over the shining rim,
Buries her chin in the creamy sea ;
Her tail hangs loose ; each drowsy paw
Is doubled under each bending knee.

A long dim ecstasy holds her life ;
Her world is an infinite shapeless white,
Till her tongue has curled the last half drop,
Then she sinks back into the night,

Draws and dips her body to heap
Her sleepy nerves in the great arm-chair,
Lies defeated and buried deep
Three or four hours unconscious there.

T. STURGE MOORE

SENT FROM EGYPT WITH A FAIR ROBE
OF TISSUE TO A SICILIAN VINE-DRESSER.

276 B.C.

PUT out to sea, if wine thou wouldest make
Such as is made in Cos : when open boat
May safely launch, advice of pilots take ;
And find the deepest bottom, most remote
From all encroachment of the crumbling shore,
Where no fresh stream tempers the rich salt wave,
Forcing rash sweetness on sage ocean's brine ;
As youthful shepherds pour
Their first love forth to Battos gnarled and grave,
Fooling shrewd age to bless some fond design.

Not after storm ! but when, for a long spell,
No white-maned horse has raced across the blue,
Put from the beach ! lest troubled be the well—
Less pure thy draught than from such depth were
due.

Fast close thy largest jars, prepared and clean !
Next weigh each buoyant womb down through
the flood,

Far down ! when, with a cord the lid remove,
And it will fill unseen,
Swift as a heart Lovesmites sucks back the blood :—
This bubbles, deeper born than sighs, shall prove.

If thy bowed shoulders ache, as thou dost haul—
Those groan who climb with rich ore from the
mine ;

Labour untold round Ilion girt a wall ;
A god toiled that Achilles' arms might shine ;
Think of these things and double knit thy will !
Then, should the sun be hot on thy return,
Cover thy jars with piles of bladder weed,
Dripping, and fragrant still
From sea-wolds where it grows like bracken-
fern :

A grapnel dragged will soon supply thy need.

Home to a tun convey thy precious freight !
Wherein, for thirty days, it should abide,
Closed, yet not quite closed from the air, and wait
While, through dim stillness, slowly doth subside
Thick sediment. The humour of a day,
Which has defeated youth and health and joy,
Down, through a dreamless sleep, will settle thus,
Till riseth maiden gay
Set free from all glooms past—or else a boy
Once more a school-friend worthy Troilus.

Yet to such cool wood tank some dream might
dip :

Vision of Aphrodite sunk to sleep,
Or of some sailor let down from a ship,
Young, dead, and lovely, while across the deep,
Through the calm night, his hoarse-voiced com-
rades chaunt—

So far at sea, they cannot reach the land

To lay him perfect in the warm brown earth.
Pray that such dreams there haunt !
While, through damp darkness, where thy tun
 doth stand,
Cold salamanders sidle round its girth.

Gently draw off the clear and tomb it yet
For other twenty days in cedar casks !
Where through trance, surely, prophecy will
 set ;

As, dedicated to light temple-tasks,
The young priest dreams the unknown mystery.
Through Ariadne, knelt disconsolate
In the sea's marge, so welled back warmth which
 throbbed

With nuptial promise : she
Turned ; and, half-choked through dewy glens,
 some great,
Some magic drone of revel coming sobbed.

Of glorious fruit, indeed, must be thy choice,
Such as has fully ripened on the branch,
Such as due rain, then sunshine, made rejoice,
Which, pulped and coloured, now deep bloom
 doth blanch ;

Clusters like odes for victors in the games,
Strophe on strophe globed, pure nectar all !
Spread such to dry,—if Helios grant thee grace,
Exposed unto his flames
Two days, or, if not, three ; or, should rain
 fall ;
Stretch them on hurdles in the house four days.

Grapes are not sharded chestnuts, which the tree
Lets fall to burst them on the ground, where red
Rolls forth the fruit, from white-lined wards set
free,

And all undamaged glows 'mid husks it shed ;
Nay, they are soft and should be singly stripped
From off the bunch, by maiden's dainty hand,
Then dropped through the cool silent depth to sink
Coy, as herself hath slipped,
Bathing, from shelves in caves along the strand)

Till round each dark grape water barely wink ;
Since some nine measures of sea-water fill
A butt of fifty, ere the plump fruit peep,
—Like sombre dolphin shoals when nights are
still,

Which penned in Proteus' wizard circle sleep,
And 'twixt them glinting curves of silver glance
If Zephyr, dimpling dark calm, counts them
o'er.—

Let soak thy fruit for two days thus, then tread !
While bare-legged bumpkins dance,
Bright from thy bursting press arched spouts
shall pour,
And gurgling torrents towards thy vats run red.

Meanwhile the maidens, each with wooden rake,
Drag back the skins and laugh at aprons
splashed ;
Or youths rest, boasting how their brown arms
ache,
So fast their shovels for so long have flashed,

Baffling their comrades' legs with mounting
heaps.

Treble their labour ! still the happier they,
Who at this genial task wear out long hours,
Till vast night round them creeps,
When soon the torch-light dance whirls them
away ;

For gods who love wine double all their powers.
Bacchus is the always grateful god !

His vineyards are more fair than gardens far ;
Hanging, like those of Babylon, they nod

O'er each Ionian cliff and hill-side scar !

While Cypris lends him saltness, depth, and
peace ;

The brown earth yields him sap for richest green ;
And he has borrowed laughter from the sky ;
Wildness from winds ; and bees
Bring honey.—Then choose casks which thou
hast seen

Are leakless, very wholesome, and quite dry !

That Coan wine the very finest is,
I do assure thee, who have travelled much
And learned to judge of diverse vintages.
Faint not before the toil ! this wine is such
As tempteth princes launch long pirate barks ;—
From which may Zeus protect Sicilian bays,
And, ere long, me safe home from Egypt bring,
Letting no black-sailed sharks
Scent this king's gifts, for whom I sweeten praise
With those same songs thou didst to Chloë sing !

I wrote them 'neath the vine-cloaked elm, for
thee.

Recall those nights ! our couches were a load
Of scented lentisk ; upward, tree by tree,
Thy father's orchard sloped, and past us flowed
A stream sluiced for his vineyards ; when, above,
The apples fell, they on to us were rolled,
But kept us not awake.—O Laco, own
How thou didst rave of love !
Now art thou staid, thy son is three years old ;
But I, who made thee love-songs, live alone.

Muse thou at dawn o'er thy yet slumbering
wife !—

Not chary of her best was nature there,
Who, though a third of her full gift of life
Was spent, still added beauties still more rare ;
What calm slow days, what holy sleep at night,
Evolved her for long twilight trystings fraught
With panic blushes and tip-toe surmise :
And then, what mystic might—
All, with a crowning boon, through travail
brought !
Consider this and give thy best likewise !

Ungrateful be not ! Laco, ne'er be that !
Well worth thy while to make such wine 'twould be :
I see thy red face 'neath thy broad straw hat,
I see thy house, thy vineyards, Sicily !—
Thou dost demur, good but too easy friend !
Come, put those doubts away ! thou hast strong
lads,

T. STURGE MOORE

Brave wenches ; on the steep beach lolls thy ship
Where vine-clad slopes descend,
Sheltering our bay, that headlong rillet glads,
Like a stripped child fain in the sea to dip.

A SPANISH PICTURE

THY life is over now, Don Juan :

Thy fingers are so shrunk
That all their rings from off their cold tips crowd,
Where limp thy hand hath sunk ;

On a trestle-table laid, Don Juan,
A half-mask near thine ear,
A visor black in which void gape two gaps
Where through thou oft didst leer.

Thou waitest for the priests, Don Juan,
To bear thee to thy grave ;
Thou'rt theirs at length beyond all doubt, but
ha !
Hast now no soul to save.

Thou wast brought home last night, Don Juan,
Upon a stable door ;
Beneath a young nun's casement, found dropped
dead,
Where thou hadst wooed of yore :

To pay their trouble then, Don Juan,
Those base grooms took thy sword ;
A rapier to fetch gold, with shagreened sheath,
Wrought hand-grip, and silk cord ;

Which, with thy fame enhanced, Don Juan,
Were worth hidalgo's rent ;
Yet on which now, at most, some few moidore
May by some fop be spent.

Dull brown a cloak enwraps, Don Juan,
Both thy lean shanks, one arm,
That old bird-cage thy breast, where like magpie
Thy heart hopped on alarm.

Yet out beyond thy cloak, Don Juan,
Thrust prim white-stockin'g'd feet—
Silk-stockin'g'd feet that in quadrille pranced
round—
Slippers high-heeled and neat ;

Thy silver-buckled shoes, Don Juan,
No more shall tread a floor,
Beside their heels upon the board lies now
A half-peeled onion's core ;

Munching, a crone, that knew, Don Juan,
Thy best contrivèd plots,
Hobbles about the room, whose gaunt stone walls
Drear echo as she trots ;

T. STURGE MOORE

She makes her bundle up, Don Juan ;
She'll not forget thy rings,
Thy buckles, nor silk stockings ; nay, not she !
They'll go with her few things.

Those lids she hath pulled down, Don Juan,
That lowered ne'er for shame ;
No spark from beauty more in thy brain pan,
Shall make its tinder flame :

Thou hast enjoyed all that, Don Juan,
Which good resolves doth daunt,
Which hypocrites doth tempt to stake vile souls,
Which cowards crave and want ;

Thou wast an envied man, Don Juan,
Long shall be envied still ;
Thou hadst thy beauty as the proud pard hath,
And instinct trained to skill.

A DUET

“ FLOWERS nodding gaily, scent in air,
Flowers posied, flowers for the hair,
Sleepy flowers, flowers bold to stare— ”
“ Oh, pick me some ! ”

“ Shells with lip, or tooth, or bleeding gum,
Tell-tale shells, and shells that whisper ‘ Come,’
Shells that stammer, blush, and yet are dumb— ”
“ Oh, let me hear ! ”

“ Eyes so black they draw one trembling near,
Brown eyes, caverns flooded with a tear,
Cloudless eyes, blue eyes so windy clear— ”
“ Oh, look at me ! ”

“ Kisses sadly blown across the sea,
Darkling kisses, kisses fair and free,
Bob-a-cherry kisses ‘neath a tree— ”
“ Oh, give me one ! ”

Thus sang a king and queen in Babylon.

THE GAZELLES

WHEN the sheen on tall summer grass is pale,
Across blue skies white clouds float on
In shoals, or disperse and singly sail,
Till, the sun being set, they all are gone :

Yet, as long as they may shine bright in the sun,
They flock or stray through the daylight bland,
While their stealthy shadows like foxes run
Beneath where the grass is dry and tanned :

And the waste, in hills that swell and fall,
Goes heaving into yet dreamier haze ;
And a wonder of silence is over all
Where the eye feeds long like a lover’s gaze :

Then, cleaving the grass, gazelles appear
(The gentler dolphins of kindlier waves)
With sensitive heads alert of ear ;
Frail crowds that a delicate hearing saves,

That rely on the nostrils' keenest power,
And are governed from trance-like distances
By hopes and fears, and, hour by hour,
Sagacious of safety, snuff the breeze.

They keep together, the timid hearts ;
And each one's fear with a panic thrill
Is passed to an hundred ; and if one starts
In three seconds all are over the hill.

A Nimrod might watch, in his hall's wan space,
After the feast, on the moonlit floor,
The timorous mice that troop and race,
As tranced o'er those herds the sun doth pour ;

Like a wearied tyrant sated with food
Who envies each tiniest thief that steals
Its hour from his abstracted mood,
For it living zest and beauty reveals.

He alone, save the quite dispassionate moon,
Sees them ; she stares at the prowling pard
Who surprises their sleep and, ah ! how soon
Is riding the weakest or sleepiest hard !

T. STURGE MOORE

Let an agony's nightmare course begin,
Four feet with five spurs a piece control,
Like a horse thief reduced to save his skin
Or a devil that rides a human soul !

The race is as long as recorded time,
Yet brief as the flash of assassin's knife ;
For 'tis crammed as history is with crime
'Twixt the throbs at taking and losing life ;

Then the warm wet clutch on the nape of th
neck,
Through which the keen incisors drive ;
Then the fleet knees give, down drops the wreck
Of yesterday's pet that was so alive.

Yet the moon is naught concerned, ah no !
She shines as on a drifting plank
Far in some northern sea-stream's flow
From which two numbed hands loosened and
sank.

Such thinning their number must suffer ; and
worse
When hither at times the Shah's children roam,
Their infant listlessness to immerse
In energy's ancient upland home :

For here the shepherd in years of old
Was taught by the stars, and bred a race
That welling forth from these highlands rolled
In tides of conquest o'er earth's face :

T. STURGE MOORE

On piebald ponies or else milk-white,
Here, with green bridles in silver bound,
A crescent moon on the violet night
Of their saddle cloths, or a sun raved round,—

With tiny bells on their harness ringing,
And voices that laugh and are shrill by starts,
Prancing, curvetting, and with them bringing
Swift chetahs cooped up in light-wheeled carts,

They come, and their dainty pavilions pitch
In some valley, beside a sinuous pool,
Where a grove of cedars towers in which
Herons have built, where the shade is cool;

Where they tether their ponies to low hung
boughs,
Where long through the night their red fires
gleam,
Where the morning's stir doth them arouse
To their bath in the lake, as from dreams to a
dream.

And thence in an hour their hunt rides forth,
And the chetahs course the shy gazelle
To the east or west or south or north,
And every eve in a distant vale

A hecatomb of the slaughtered beasts
Is piled; tongues loll from breathless throats;
Round large jet eyes the horsefly feasts—
Jet eyes, which now a blue film coats:

Dead there they bleed, and each prince there
Is met by his sister, wife, or bride—
Delicious ladies with long dark hair,
And soft dark eyes, and brows arched wide,

In quilted jacket, embroidered sash,
And tent-like skirts of pleated lawn ;
While their silk-lined jewelled slippers flash
Round bare feet bedded like pools at dawn :

So choicefully prepared to please,
Young, female, royal of race and mood,
In indolent compassion these
O'er those dead beauteous creatures brood :

They lean some minutes against their friend,
A lad not slow to praise himself,
Who tells how this one met his end
Out-raced, or trapped by leopard stealth,

And boasts his chetahs fleetest are ;
Through his advice the chance occurred,
That leeward vale by which the car
Was well brought round to head the herd.

Seeing him bronzed by sun and wind,
She feels his power and owns him lord,
Then, that his courage may please her mind,
With a soft coy hand half draws his sword,

Just shudders to see the cold steel gleam,
And drops it back in the long curved sheath ;
She will make his evening meal a dream
And surround his sleep like some rich wreath

Of heavy-lidded flowers bewitched
To speak soft words of ecstasy
To wizard king old, wise, and enriched
With all save youth's and love's sweet glee.

But, while they sleep, the orphaned herd
And wounded stragglers, through the night
Wander in pain, and wail unheard
To the moon and the stars so cruelly bright :

Why are they born ? ah ! why beget
They in the long November gloom
Heirs of their beauty, their fleetness,—yet
Heirs of their panics, their pangs, their doom ?

That to princely spouses children are born
To be daintily bred and taught to please,
Has a fitness like the return of morn :
But why perpetuate lives like these ?

Why, with horns that jar and with fiery eyes,
Should the male stags fight for the shuddering does
Through the drear dark nights, with frequent
cries
From tyrant lust or outlawed woes ?

Doth the meaningless beauty of their lives
Rave in the spring, when they course afar
Like the shadows of birds, and the young fav
strives

Till its parents no longer the fleetest are ?

Like the shadows of flames which the sun's ra
throw

On a kiln's blank wall, where glaziers dwell,
Pale shadows as those from glasses they blow,
Yet that lap at the blank wall and rebel,—

Even so to my curious trance-like thought
Those herds move over those pallid hills,
With fever as of a frail life caught
In circumstance o'er-charged with ills ;

More like the shadow of lives than life,
Or most like the life that is never born
From baffled purpose and foredoomed strife,
That in each man's heart must be hidden fro
scorn

Yet with something of beauty very rare
Unseizable, fugitive, half discerned ;
The trace of intentions that might have been fai
In action, left on a face that yearned

But long has ceased to yearn, alas !
So faint a trace do they leave on the slopes
Of hills as sleek as their coats with grass ;
So faint may the trace be of noblest hopes.

T. STURGE MOORE

Yet why are they born to roam and die ?
Can their beauty answer thy query, O soul ?
Nay, nor that of hopes which were born to fly,
But whose pinions the common and coarse day
stole.

Like that region of grassy hills outspread,
A realm of our thoughts knows days and nights
And summers and winters, and has fed
Ineffectual herds of vanished delights.

ROBERT NICHOLS

TO —

ASLEEP within the deadest hour of night
And turning with the earth, I was aware
How suddenly the eastern curve was bright,
As when the sun arises from his lair.
But not the sun arose : it was thy hair
Shaken up heaven in tossing leagues of light.

Since then I know that neither night nor day
May I escape thee, O my heavenly hell !
Awake, in dreams, thou springest to waylay
And should I dare to die, I know full well
Whose voice would mock me in the mournin^g
bell,
Whose face would greet me in hell's fiery way.

FAREWELL TO PLACE OF COMFORT

FOR the last time, maybe, upon the knoll
I stand. The eve is golden, languid, sad. . . .
Day like a tragic actor plays his rôle
To the last whispered word, and falls gold-clad.
I, too, take leave of all I ever had.

ROBERT NICHOLS

They shall not say I went with heavy heart :
Heavy I am, but soon I shall be free ;
I love them all, but O I now depart
A little sadly, strangely, fearfully,
As one who goes to try a Mystery.

The bell is sounding down in Dedham Vale :
Be still, O bell ! too often standing here
When all the air was tremulous, fine, and pale,
Thy golden note so calm, so still, so clear,
Out of my stony heart has struck a tear.

And now tears are not mine. I have release
From all the former and the later pain ;
Like the mid-sea I rock in boundless peace,
Soothed by the charity of the deep sea rain. . . .
Calm rain ! Calm sea ! Calm found, long sought
in vain.

O bronzen pines, evening of gold and blue,
Steep mellow slope, brimmed twilit pools below.
Hushed trees, still vale dissolving in the dew,
Farewell ! Farewell ! There is no more to do
We have been happy. Happy now I go.

THE FULL HEART

ALONE on the shore in the pause of the night-time
I stand and I hear the long wind blow light ;
I view the constellations quietly, quietly burning ;
I hear the wave fall in the hush of the night.

Long after I am dead, ended this bitter journey,
 Many another whose heart holds no light
 Shall your solemn sweetness, hush, awe, and
 comfort,
 O my companions, Wind, Waters, Stars, and
 Night.

Near Gold Cap, 1916.

THE TOWER

It was deep night, and over Jerusalem's low roofs
 The moon floated, drifting through high vaporous woofs.
 The moonlight crept and glistened silent, solemn, sweet,
 Over dome and column, up empty, endless street ;
 In the closed, scented gardens the rose loosed from the stem
 Her white showery petals ; none regarded them ;
 The starry thicket breathed odours to the sentinel palm ;
 Silence possessed the city like a soul possessed by calm.

Not a spark in the warren under the giant night,
 Save where in a turret's lantern beamed a grave,
 still light :

ROBERT NICHOLS

There in the topmost chamber a gold-eyed lamp
 was lit—

Marvellous lamp in darkness, informing, redeeming it !

For, set in that tiny chamber, Jesus, the blessed
 and doomed,

Spoke to the lone apostles as light to men entombed ;

And spreading His hands in blessing, as one soon
 to be dead,

He put soft enchantment into spare wine and bread.

The hearts of the disciples were broken and full
 of tears,

Because their Lord, the spearless, was hedged
 about with spears ;

And in His face the sickness of departure had
 spread a gloom

At leaving His young friends friendless.

They could not forget the tomb.

He smiled subduedly, telling, in tones soft as
 voice of the dove,

The endlessness of sorrow, the eternal solace of
 love ;

And lifting the earthly tokens, wine and sorrowful bread,

He bade them sup and remember One who lived
 and was dead,

And they could not restrain their weeping.

But one rose up to depart,

Having weakness and hate of weakness raging
 within his heart,

ROBERT NICHOLS

And bowed to the robed assembly whose eyes
gleamed wet in the light.

Judas arose and departed ; night went out to the
night.

Then Jesus lifted His voice like a fountain in an
ocean of tears,

And comforted His disciples and calmed and
allayed their fears.

But Judas wound down the turret, creeping from
floor to floor,

And would fly ; but one leaning, weeping, barred
him beside the door.

And he knew her by her ruddy garment and two
yet-watching men :

Mary of Seven Evils, Mary Magdalen.

And he was frightened at her. She sighed : ' I
dreamed Him dead.

We sell the body for silver . . . '

Then Judas cried out and fled
Forth into the night ! . . . The moon had begun
to set ;

A drear, deft wind went sifting, setting the dust
afret,

Into the heart of the city Judas ran on and
prayed

To stern Jehovah lest his deed make him
afraid.

But in the tiny lantern, hanging as if on
air,

The disciples sat unspeaking. Amaze and peace
were there.

ROBERT NICHOLS

For *His* voice, more lovely than song of all
earthly birds,
In accents humble and happy spoke slow, con-
soling words.

Thus Jesus discoursed, and was silent, sitting
upright, and soon
Past the casement behind Him slanted the sink-
ing moon ;
And, rising for Olivet, all stared, between love
and dread,
Seeing the torrid moon a ruddy halo behind His
head.

FULFILMENT

WAS there love once ? I have forgotten her.
Was there grief once ? grief yet is mine.
Other loves I have, men rough, but men who stir
More grief, more joy, than love of thee and thine.

Faces cheerful, full of whimsical mirth,
Lined by the wind, burned by the sun ;
Bodies enraptured by the abounding earth,
As whose children we are brethren : one.

And any moment may descend hot death
To shatter limbs ! pulp, tear, blast
Beloved soldiers who love rough life and breath
Not less for dying faithful to the last.

ROBERT NICHOLS

O the fading eyes, the grimed face turned bony,
Oped mouth gushing, fallen head,
Lessening pressure of a hand shrunk, clammed
and stony !

O sudden spasm, release of the dead !

Was there love once ? I have forgotten her.

Was there grief once ? grief yet is mine.

O loved, living, dying, heroic soldier,

All, all, my joy, my grief, my love, are thine !

THE SPRIG OF LIME

HE lay, and those who watched him were amazed
To see unheralded beneath the lids
Twin tears, new gathered at the price of pain,
Start and at once run crookedly athwart
Cheeks channelled long by pain, never by tears.
So desolate too the sigh next uttered
They had wept also, but his great lips moved,
And bending down one heard, '*A sprig of lime* ;
Bring me a sprig of lime.' Whereat she stole
With dumb signs forth to pluck the thing he
craved.

So lay he till a lime-twig had been snapped
From some still branch that swept the outer grass
Far from the silver pillar of the bole
Which mounting past the house's crusted roof
Split into massy limbs, crossed boughs, a maze

ROBERT NICHOLS

Of close-compacted intercontorted staffs
Bowered in foliage where through the sun
Shot sudden showers of light or crystal spars
Or wavered in a green and vitreous flood.

And all the while in faint and fainter tones
Scarce audible on deepened evening's hush
He framed his curious and last request,
For '*lime, a sprig of lime.*' Her trembling hand
Closed his loose fingers on the awkward stem
Covered above with gentle heart-shaped leaves
And under dangling, pale as honey-wax,
Square clusters of sweet-scented starry flowers.

She laid his bent arm back upon his breast,
Then watched above white knuckles clenched in
prayer.

He never moved. Only at last his eyes
Opened, then brightened in such avid gaze
She feared the coma mastered him again . . .
But no; strange sobs rose chuckling in his throat,
A stranger ecstasy suffused the flesh
Of that just mask so sun-dried, gouged and old
Which few—too few!—had loved, too many
feared.

‘Father,’ she cried; ‘Father!’

He did not hear.

She knelt and kneeling drank the scent of limes,
Blown round the slow blind by a vesperal gust,
Till the room swam. So the lime incense blew
Into her life as once it had in his,

ROBERT NICHOLS

Though how and when and with what ageles
charge
Of sorrow and deep joy how could she know ?

Sweet lime that often at the height of noon
Diffusing dizzy fragrance from your boughs,
Tasselled with blossoms more innumerable
Than the black bees, the uproar of whose toil
Filled your green vaults, winning such metheglyi
As clouds their sappy cells, distil, as once
Ye used, your sunniest emanations
Toward the window where a woman kneels—
She who within that room in childish hours
Lay through the lasting murmur of blanch'd
noon

Behind the sultry blind, now full now flat,
Drinking anew of every odorous breath,
Supremely happy in her ignorance
Of Time that hastens hourly and of Death
Who need not haste. Scatter your fumes, O lime,
Loose from each hispid star of citron bloom,
Tangled beneath the labyrinthine boughs,
Cloud on such stinging cloud of exhalations
As reek of youth, fierce life and summer's prime,
Though hardly now shall he in that dusk room
Savour your sweetness, since the very sprig,
Profuse of blossom and of essences,
He smells not, who in a paltering hand
Clasps it laid close his peaked and gleaming face
Propped in the pillow. Breathe silent, lofty lime,
Your curfew secrets out in fervid scent
To the attendant shadows ! Tinge the air

ROBERT NICHOLS

Of the midsummer night that now begins,
At an owl's oaring flight from dusk to dusk
And downward caper of the giddy bat
Hawking against the lustre of bare skies,
With something of th' unfathomable bliss
He, who lies dying there, knew once of old
In the serene trance of a summer night
When with th' abundance of his young bride's
 hair

Loosed on his breast he lay and dared not sleep,
Listening for the scarce motion of your boughs,
Which sighed with bliss as she with blissful sleep,
And drinking desperately each honied wave
Of perfume wafted past the ghostly blind
Knew first th' implacable and bitter sense
Of Time that hastes and Death who need not
 haste.

Shed your last sweetness, limes !

 But now no more.

She, fruit of that night's love, she heeds you not,
Who bent, compassionate, to the dim floor
Takes up the sprig of lime and presses it
In pain against the stumbling of her heart,
Knowing, untold, he cannot need it now.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

THE TWILIGHT PEOPLE

IT is a whisper among the hazel bushes ;
It is a long low whispering voice that fills
With a sad music the bending and swayin
rushes ;
It is a heart beat deep in the quiet hills.

Twilight people, why will you still be crying,
Crying and calling to me out of the trees ?
For under the quiet grass the wise are lying,
And all the strong ones are gone over the seas

And I am old, and in my heart at your calling
Only the old dead dreams a-fluttering go ;
As the wind, the forest wind, in its falling
Sets the withered leaves fluttering to and fro.

W I L F R E D O W E N

STRANGE MEETING

IT seemed that out of the battle I escaped
Down some profound dull tunnel, long since
scooped
Through granites which Titanic wars had groined.
Yet also there encumbered sleepers groaned,
Too fast in thought or death to be bestirred.
Then, as I probed them, one sprang up, and
stared
With piteous recognition in fixed eyes,
Lifting distressful hands as if to bless.
And by his smile, I knew that sullen hall.
With a thousand fears that vision's face was
grained ;
Yet no blood reached there from the upper
ground,
And no guns thumped, or down the flues made
moan.
“ Strange, friend,” I said, “ here is no cause to
mourn.”
“ None,” said the other, “ save the undone years
The hopelessness. Whatever hope is yours,
Was my life also ; I went hunting wild
After the wildest beauty in the world,
Which lies not calm in eyes, or braided hair,
But mocks the steady running of the hour,
And if it grieves, grieves richlier than here.

W I L F R E D O W E N

For by my glee might many men have laughed
And of my weeping something has been left,
Which must die now. I mean the truth untold
The pity of war, the pity war distilled.
Now men will go content with what we spoiled
Or, discontent, boil bloody, and be spilled.
They will be swift with swiftness of the tigress,
None will break ranks, though nations trek fro
progress.

Courage was mine, and I had mystery,
Wisdom was mine, and I had mastery ;
To miss the march of this retreating world
Into vain citadels that are not walled.
Then, when much blood had clogged their chario
wheels

I would go up and wash them from sweet wells,
Even with truths that lie too deep for taint.
I would have poured my spirit without stint
But not through wounds ; not on the cess of wa
Foreheads of men have bled where no wound
were.

I am the enemy you killed, my friend.
I knew you in this death : for so you frowned
Yesterday through me as you jabbed and killed
I parried ; but my hands were loath and cold.
Let us sleep now . . . ”

JOSEPH PLUNKETT

I SEE HIS BLOOD UPON THE ROSE

I see His blood upon the rose
And in the stars the glory of His eyes,
His body gleams amid eternal snows,
His tears fall from the skies.

I see His face in every flower ;
The thunder and the singing of the birds
Are but His voice—and carven by His power
Rocks are His written words.

All pathways by His feet are worn,
His strong heart stirs the ever-beating sea,
His crown of thorns is twined with every thorn,
His cross is every tree.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

"IN THE PINK"

So Davies wrote: "This leaves me in the pink
Then scrawled his name: "Your loving sweet
heart, Willie"
With crosses for a hug. He'd had a drink
Of rum and tea; and, though the barn was
chilly,
For once his blood ran warm; he had pay to
spend.
Winter was passing; soon the year would mend.

He couldn't sleep that night. Stiff in the dark
He groaned and thought of Sundays at the farm
When he'd go out as cheerful as a lark
In his best suit to wander arm-in-arm
With brown-eyed Gwen, and whisper in her ear
The simple silly things she liked to hear.

And then he thought: to-morrow night we
trudge
Up to the trenches, and my boots are rotten.
Five miles of stodgy clay and freezing sludge,
And everything but wretchedness forgotten.
To-night he's in the pink; but soon he'll die.
And still the war goes on; he don't know why.

THE DEATH-BED

He drowsed and was aware of silence heaped
 Round him, unshaken as the steadfast walls ;
 Aqueous-like floating rays of amber light,
 Soaring and quivering in the wings of sleep,—
 Silence and safety ; and his mortal shore
 Lipped by the inward, moonless waves of death.

Some one was holding water to his mouth,
 He swallowed, unresisting ; moaned and dropped
 Through crimson gloom to darkness ; and forgot
 The opiate throb and ache that was his wound.
 Water—calm, sliding green above the weir ;
 Water—a sky-lit alley for his boat,
 Bird-voiced, and bordered with reflected flowers
 And shaken hues of summer : drifting down,
 He dipped contented oars, and sighed, and slept.

Night, with a gust of wind, was in the ward,
 Blowing the curtain to a glimmering curve.
 Night. He was blind ; he could not see the stars
 Glinting among the wraiths of wandering cloud ;
 Queer blots of colour, purple, scarlet, green,
 Flickered and faded in his drowning eyes.

Rain ; he could hear it rustling through the dark
 Fragrance and passionless music woven as one ;
 Warm rain on drooping roses ; pattering showers

That soak the woods ; not the harsh rain that
sweeps
Behind the thunder, but a trickling peace
Gently and slowly washing life away.

* * *

He stirred, shifting his body ; then the pain
Leaped like a prowling beast, and gripped an
tore

His groping dreams with grinding claws and fangs
But some one was beside him ; soon he lay
Shuddering because that evil thing had passed.
And Death, who'd stepped toward him, pause
and stared.

Light many lamps and gather round his bed.
Lend him your eyes, warm blood, and will to live
Speak to him ; rouse him ; you may save him yet
He's young ; he hated war ; how should he die
When cruel old campaigners win safe through ?

But Death replied : "I choose him." So he went
And there was silence in the summer night ;
Silence and safety ; and the veils of sleep.
Then, far away, the thudding of the guns.

COUNTER-ATTACK

WE'D gained our first objective hours before
While dawn broke like a face with blinking eyes,
Pallid, unshaved and thirsty, blind with smoke.
Things seemed all right at first. We held their line

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

With bombers posted, Lewis guns well placed,
And clink of shovels deepening the shallow trench.
 The place was rotten with dead ; green
 clumsy legs
High-booted, sprawled and grovelled along
 the saps ;
And trunks, face downward, in the sucking
 mud,
Wallowed like trodden sand-bags loosely
 filled ;
And naked sodden buttocks, mats of hair,
Bulged, clotted heads slept in the plastering
 slime.
And then the rain began,—the jolly old
 rain !
A yawning soldier knelt against the bank,
Staring across the morning blear with fog ;
He wondered when the Allemands would get
 busy ;
And then, of course, they started with five-
 nines
Traversing, sure as fate, and never a dud.
Mute in the clamour of shells he watched them
 burst,
Spouting dark earth and wire with gusts from
 hell,
While posturing giants dissolved in drifts of
 smoke.
He crouched and flinched, dizzy with galloping
 fear,
Sick for escape,—loathing the strangled horror
And butchered, frantic gestures of the dead.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON

An officer came blundering down the trench :
“ Stand-to and man the fire-step ! ” On
went . . .

Gasping and bawling, “ Fire-step . . . Coun-
attack ! ”

Then the haze lifted. Bombing on the ri-
Down the old sap : machine-guns on
left ;

And stumbling figures looming out in fro-
“ O Christ, they’re coming at us ! ” Bull
spat,

And he remembered his rifle . . . rapid fire .
And started blazing wildly. . . . Then a bang
Crumpled and spun him sideways, knocked h-
out

To grunt and wriggle : none heeded him ;
choked

And fought the flapping veils of smotheri-
gloom,

Lost in a blurred confusion of yells and groans. .
Down, and down, and down, he sank and drowne-
Bleeding to death. The counter-attack had fail-

DREAMERS

SOLDIERS are citizens of death’s grey land,
Drawing no dividend from time’s to-morrows
In the great hour of destiny they stand,
Each with his feuds, and jealousies, an
sorrows.

Soldiers are sworn to action ; they must win
 Some flaming, fatal climax with their lives.
 Soldiers are dreamers ; when the guns begin
 They think of firelit homes, clean beds, and
 wives.

I see them in foul dug-outs, gnawed by rats,
 And in the ruined trenches, lashed with rain,
 Dreaming of things they did with balls and bats,
 And mocked by hopeless longing to regain
 Bank-holidays, and picture shows, and spats,
 And going to the office in the train.

EVERYONE SANG

EVERYONE suddenly burst out singing ;
 And I was filled with such delight
 As prisoned birds must find in freedom,
 Winging wildly across the white
 Orchards and dark-green fields ; on—on—and out
 of sight.

Everyone's voice was suddenly lifted ;
 And beauty came like the setting sun :
 My heart was shaken with tears ; and horror
 Drifted away . . . O, but Everyone
 Was a bird ; and the song was wordless ; the sing-
 ing will never be done.

EDWARD SHANKS

A NIGHT-PIECE

COME out and walk. The last few drops of
Drain silently out of the cloudy blue ;
The trees are full of the dark-stooping night,
 The fields are wet with dew.

All's quiet in the wood but, far away,
Down the hillside and out across the plain,
Moves, with long trail of white that marks its w
 The softly panting train.

Come through the clearing. Hardly now we s
The flowers, save dark or light against the gras
Or glimmering silver on a scented tree
 That trembles as we pass.

Hark now ! So far, so far . . . that dista
 song . . .
Move not the rustling grasses with your feet.
The dusk is full of sounds, that all along
 The muttering boughs repeat.

So far, so faint, we lift our heads in doubt.
Wind, or the blood that beats within our ears,
Has feigned a dubious and delusive note,
 Such as a dreamer hears.

Again . . . again ! The faint sounds rise and fail.
 So far the enchanted tree, the song so low . . .
 A drowsy thrush ? A waking nightingale ?
 Silence. We do not know.

THE GLOW-WORM

THE pale road winds faintly upward into the
 dark skies,
 And beside it on the rough grass that the wind
 invisibly stirs,
 Sheltered by sharp-speared gorse and the berried
 junipers,
 Shining steadily with a green light, the glow-
 worm lies.

We regard it ; and this hill and all the other hills
 That fall in foldsto theriver, very smooth and steep,
 And the hangers and brakes that the darkness
 thickly fills
 Fade like phantoms round the light and night is
 deep, so deep,—

That all the world is emptiness about the still flame
 And we are small shadows standing lost in the
 huge night.
 We gather up the glow-worm, stooping with
 dazzled sight,
 And carry it to the little enclosed garden whence
 we came,

E D W A R D S H A N K S

And place it on the short grass. Then the
shadowy flowers fade,
The walls waver and melt and the houses disappear
And the solid town trembles into insubstantial
shade
Round the light of the burning glow-worm, steady
and clear.

THE HALT

*“Mark time in front! Rear fours cover
Company—halt!
Order arms! Stand at—ease! Stand easy.”*
A sudden hush :
And then the talk began with a mighty rush—
“ You weren’t ever in step—The sergeant—It
wasn’t my fault—
Well, the Lord be praised at least for a ten
minutes’ halt.”
We sat on a gate and watched them easing and
shifting ;
Out of the distance a faint, keen breath came
drifting,
From the sea behind the hills, and the hedges
were salt.

Where do you halt now ? Under what hedge do
you lie ?
Where the tall poplars are fringing the white
French roads ?
And smoke I have not seen discolours the foreign
sky ?

EDWARD SHANKS

Is the company resting there as we rested
together

Stamping its feet and readjusting its loads
And looking with wary eyes at the drooping
weather ?

A HOLLOW ELM

WHAT hast thou not withstood ;
Tempest-despising tree,
Whose bleak and riven wood
Gapes now so hollowly,
What rains have beaten thee through many
years,
What snows from off thy branches dripped like
tears ?

Calmly thou standest now
Upon thy sunny mound ;
The first spring breezes flow
Past with sweet dizzy sound ;
Yet on thy pollard top the branches few
Stand stiffly out, disdain to murmur too.

The children at thy foot
Open new-lighted eyes,
Where, on gnarled bark and root,
The soft, warm sunshine lies—
Dost thou, upon thine ancient sides, resent
The touch of youth, quick and impermanent ?

EDWARD SHANKS

These, at the beck of spring,
Live in the moment still ;
Thy boughs unquivering,
Remembering winter's chill,
And many other winters past and gone,
Are mocked, not cheated, by the transient sun.

Hast thou so much withstood,
Tempest-despising tree,
That now thy hollow wood
Stiffens disdainfully
Against the soft spring airs and soft spring rain,
Knowing too well that winter comes again ?

THE RETURN

I

Now into hearts long empty of the sun
The morning comes again with golden light
And all the shades of the half-dusk are done
And all the crevices are suddenly bright.
So gradually had love lain down to sleep,
We knew it not ; but when we saw his head
Pillowed and sunken in a trance so deep
We whispered shuddering that he was dead.
Then you like Psyche took the light and leant
Over the monster lying in his place,
Daring, despairing, trembling as you bent . . .
But love raised up his new-awakening face

EDWARD SHANKS

And into our hearts long empty of the sun
We felt the sky-distilled bright liquor run.

II

When love comes back that went in mist and
cloud

He comes triumphant in his pomp and power ;
Voices that muttered long are glad and loud
To mark the sweetness of the sudden hour.
How could we live so long in that half-light ?
That opiate shadow, where the deadened nerves
So soon forget how hills and winds are bright,
That drugged and sleepy dusk, that only serves
With false shades to conceal the emptiness
Of hearts whence love has stolen unawares,
Where creeping doubts and dumb, dull sorrows

press

And weariness with blind eyes gapes and stares.
This was our state, but now a happy song
Rings through our inner sunlight all day long.

III

When that I lay in a mute agony,
I nothing saw nor heard nor felt nor thought,
The inner self, the quintessential me,
In that blind hour beyond all sense was brought
Hard against pain. I had no body, no mind,
Nought but the point that suffers joy or loss,
No eyes in sudden blackness to be blind,
No brain for swift regrets to run across.

E D W A R D S H A N K S

But when you touched me, when your hot tears
 fell,
The point that had been nothing else but pain
Changed into rapture by a miracle,
In which all raptures known before were vain.
Thus loss which bared the utmost shivering
 nerve
For joy's precursor in the heart did serve.

CLOUDS

OVER this hill the high clouds float all day
And trail their long, soft shadows on the grass,
And now above the meadows make delay
And now with regular, swift motion pass.
Now comes a threatening drift from the south-
west,
In smoky colours drest,
That spills far out upon the chequered plain
Its burden of dark rain ;
Then hard behind a stately galleon
Sails onward with its piled and carven towers
Stiff sculptured like a heap of marble flowers,
Rigid, unaltering, a miracle
Of moulded surfaces, whereon the light
Shines steadily, intolerably bright ;
Now on a livelier wind a wandering bell
Of delicate vapour comes, invisibly hung,
Like feathers from the seeding thistle flung,
And saunters wantonly far out of sight.

E D W A R D S H A N K S

O God, who fill'st with shifting imagery
The blue page of the sky,
Thus writ'st thou also, with as vague a pen,
In the immenser hearts of dreaming men.

THE ROCK POOL

THIS is the Sea. In these uneven walls
A wave lies prisoned. Far and far away,
Outward to ocean, as the slow tide falls,
Her sisters, through the capes that hold
the bay,
Dancing in lovely liberty recede.
But lovely in captivity she lies,
Filled with soft colours, where the waving weed
Moves gently, and discloses to our eyes
Blurred shining veins of rock and lucent shells
Under the light-shot water, and here repose
Small quiet fish, and dimly-glowing bells
Of sleeping sea-anemones that close
Their tender fronds and will not now awake
Till on these rocks the waves returning break.

THE SWIMMERS

THE cove's a shining plate of blue and green,
With darker belts between
The trough and crest of the slow-rising swell,
And the great rocks throw purple shadows down,

E D W A R D S H A N K S

Where transient sun-sparks wink and burst and drown
And glimmering pebbles lie too deep to tell,
Hidden or shining as the shadow wavers.
And everywhere the restless sun-steeped air
Trembles and quavers,
As though it were
More saturate with light than it could bear.

Now come the swimmers from slow-dripping caves,
Where the shy fern creeps under the veined roof,
And wading out meet with glad breast the waves.
One holds aloof,
Climbing alone the reef with shrinking feet,
That scarce endure the jagged stones' dull beat
Till on the edge he poises
And flies to cleave the water, vanishing
In wreaths of white, with echoing liquid noises,
And swims beneath, a vague, distorted thing.
Now all the other swimmers leave behind
The crystal shallow and the foam-wet shore
And sliding into deeper water find
A living coolness in the lifting flood,
And through their bodies leaps the sparkling blood,
So that they feel the faint earth's drought no more.
There now they float, heads raised above the green,
White bodies cloudily seen,
Farther and farther from the brazen rock,
On which the hot air shakes, on which the tide
Fruitlessly throws with gentle, soundless shock
The cool and lagging wave. Out, out they go,

EDWARD SHANKS

And now upon a mirrored cloud they ride
Or turning over, with soft strokes and slow,
Slide on like shadows in a tranquil sky.
Behind them, on the tall, parched cliff, the dry
And dusty grasses grow
In shallow ledges of the arid stone,
Starving for coolness and the touch of rain.
But, though to earth they must return again,
Here come the soft sea-airs to meet them, blown
Over the surface of the outer deep,
Scarce moving, staying, falling, straying, gone,
Light and delightful as the touch of sleep . . .
One wakes and splashes round,
And, as by magic, all the others wake
From that sea-dream, and now with rippling sound
Their rapid arms the enchanted silence break.
And now again the crystal shallows take
The gleaming bodies whose cool hour is done ;
They pause upon the beach, they pause and sigh
Then vanish in the caverns one by one.

Soon the wet foot-marks on the stones are dry :
The cove sleeps on beneath the unwavering sun.

THE STORM

WE wake to hear the storm come down,
Sudden on roof and pane ;
The thunder's loud and the hasty wind
Hurries the beating rain.

E D W A R D S H A N K S.

The rain slackens, the wind blows gently,
 The gust grows gentle and stills,
And the thunder, like a breaking stick,
 Stumbles about the hills.

The drops still hang on leaf and thorn,
 The downs stand up more green ;
The sun comes out again in power
 And the sky is washed and clean.

C. H. SORLEY

GERMAN RAIN

THE heat came down and sapped away my
powers.

The laden heat came down and drowned my
brain,
Till through the weight of overcoming hours
I felt the rain.

Then suddenly I saw what more to see
I never thought : old things renewed, retrieved,
The rain that fell in England fell on me,
And I believed.

ALL THE HILLS AND VALES

ALL the hills and vales along
Earth is bursting into song,
And the singers are the chaps
Who are going to die perhaps.

O sing, marching men,

Till the valleys ring again.

Give your gladness to earth's keeping,
So be glad, when you are sleeping.

C. H. S O R L E Y

Cast away regret and rue,
Think what you are marching to.
Little live, great pass.
Jesus Christ and Barabbas
Were found the same day.
This died, that went his way.

So sing with joyful breath.
For why, you are going to death
Teeming earth will surely store
All the gladness that you pour.

Earth that never doubts nor fears,
Earth that knows of death, not tears,
Earth that bore with joyful ease
Hemlock for Socrates,
Earth that blossomed and was glad
'Neath the cross that Christ had,
Shall rejoice and blossom too
When the bullet reaches you.

Wherefore, men marching
On the road to death, sing !
Pour your gladness on earth's he:
So be merry, so be dead.

From the hills and valleys earth
Shouts back the sound of mirth,
Tramp of feet and lilt of song
Ringing all the road along.
All the music of their going,
Ringing swinging glad song-throwing,
Earth will echo still, when foot
Lies numb and voice mute.

C. H. S O R L E Y

On, marching men, on
To the gates of death with song.
Sow your gladness for earth's reaping,
So you may be glad, though sleeping.
Strew your gladness on earth's bed,
So be merry, so be dead.

JAMES STEPHENS

DEIDRE

Do not let any woman read this verse ;
It is for men, and after them their sons
And their sons' sons.

When we remember Deidre and her tale,
The time comes when our hearts sink utterly ;
And that her lips are dust.

Once she did tread the earth ; men took her hand
They looked into her eyes and said their say,
And she replied to them.

More than a thousand years it is since she
Was beautiful : she trod the waving grass ;
She saw the clouds.

A thousand years ! The grass is still the same
The clouds as lovely as they were that time
When Deidre was alive.

But there has never been a woman born
Who was so beautiful, not one so beautiful
Of all the women born.

Let all men go apart and mourn together ;
No man can ever love her ; not a man
Can ever be her lover.

J A M E S S T E P H E N S

No man can bend before her : no man say—
What could one say to her ? There are no
words
That one could say to her !

Now she is but a story that is told
Beside the fire ! No man can ever be
The friend of that poor queen.

THE GOAT PATHS

THE crooked paths go every way
Upon the hill—they wind about
Through the heather in and out
Of the quiet sunniness.
And there the goats, day after day,
Stray in sunny quietness,
Cropping here and cropping there,
As they pause and turn and pass,
Now a bit of heather spray
Now a mouthful of the grass.

In the deeper sunniness,
In the place where nothing stirs,
Quietly in quietness,
In the quiet of the furze,
For a time they come and lie
Staring on the roving sky.

J A M E S S T E P H E N S

If you approach they run away,
They leap and stare, away they bound
With a sudden angry sound,
To the sunny quietude ;
Crouching down where nothing stirs
In the silence of the furze,
Crouching down again to brood
In the sunny solitude.

If I were as wise as they
I would stray apart and brood,
I would beat a hidden way
Through the quiet heather spray
To a sunny solitude ;
And should you come I'd run away,
I would make an angry sound,
I would stare and turn and bound
To the deeper quietude,
To the place where nothing stirs
In the silence of the furze.

In that airy quietness
I would think as long as they ;
Through the quiet sunniness
I would stray away to brood
By a hidden beaten way
In a sunny solitude.

I would think until I found
Something I can never find,
Something lying on the ground,
In the bottom of my mind.

THE FIFTEEN ACRES

I CLING and swing
On a branch, or sing
Through the cool, clear hush of Morning O :
Or fling my wing
On the air, and bring
To sleepier birds a warning, O :
That the night's in flight,
And the sun's in sight,
And the dew is the grass adorning, O :
And the green leaves swing
As I sing, sing, sing,
Up by the river,
Down the dell,
To the little wee nest,
Where the big tree fell,
So early in the morning, O.

I flit and twit
In the sun for a bit
When his light so bright is shining, O :
Or sit and fit
My plumes, or knit
Straw plaits for the nest's nice lining, O :
And she with glee
Shows unto me
Underneath her wings reclining, O :
And I sing that Peg
Has an egg, egg, egg,

J A M E S S T E P H E N S

Up by the oat-field,
Round the mill
Past the meadow
Down the hill,
So early in the morning, O.

I stoop and swoop
On the air, or loop
Through the trees, and then go soaring, O
To group with a troop
On the gusty poop
While the wind behind is roaring, O :
I skim and swim
By a cloud's red rim
And up to the azure flooring, O :
And my wide wings drip
As I slip, slip, slip
Down through the rain-drops.
Back where Peg
Broods in the nest
On the little white egg
So early in the morning, O.

EDWARD WYNDHAM TENNANT

HOME THOUGHTS IN LAVENTIE

GREEN gardens in Laventie !
 Soldiers only know the street
Where the mud is churned and splashed about
 By battle-wending feet ;
And yet beside one stricken house there is a
 glimpse of grass,
Look for it when you pass.

Beyond the Church whose pitted spire
 Seems balanced on a strand
Of swaying stone and tottering brick
 Two roofless ruins stand,
And here behind the wreckage where the back wall
 should have been
We found a garden green.

The grass was never trodden on,
 The little path of gravel
Was overgrown with celandine,
 No other folk did travel
Along its weedy surface, but the nimble-footed
 mouse
Running from house to house.

EDWARD WYNDHAM TENNANT

So all among the vivid blades
 Of soft and tender grass
We lay, nor heard the limber wheels
 That pass and ever pass,
In noisy continuity until their stony rattle
 Seems in itself a battle.

At length we rose up from this ease
 Of tranquil happy mind,
And searched the garden's little length
 A fresh pleasaunce to find ;
And there, some yellow daffodils and jasmi
 hanging high
Did rest the tired eye.

The fairest and most fragrant
 Of the many sweets we found,
Was a little bush of Daphne flower
 Upon a grassy mound,
And so thick were the blossoms set and so divi
 the scent
That we were well content.

Hungry for Spring I bent my head,
 The perfume fanned my face,
And all my soul was dancing,
 In that lovely little place,
Dancing with a measured step from wrecked a
 shattered towns
Away . . . upon the Downs.

EDWARD WYNDHAM TENNANT

I saw green banks of daffodil,
Slim poplars in the breeze,
Great tan-brown hares in gusty March
A-couching on the leas ;
And meadows with their glittering streams, and
silver scurrying dace,
Home—what a perfect place.

Belgium, March 1916.

EDWARD THOMAS

ASPENS

ALL day and night, save winter, every weath
Above the inn, the smithy, and the shop,
The aspens at the cross-roads talk together
Of rain, until their last leaves fall from the to

Out of the blacksmith's cavern comes the ring
Of hammer, shoe, and anvil ; out of the inn
The clink, the hum, the roar, the random singin'
The sounds that for these fifty years have bee

The whispers of the aspens is not drowned,
And over lightless pane and footless road,
Empty as sky, with every other sound
Not ceasing, calls their ghosts from their abode

A silent smithy, a silent inn, not fails
In the bare moonlight or the thick-furred glo
In tempest or the night of nightingales,
To turn the cross-roads to a ghostly room.
And it would be the same were no house near,
Over all sorts of weather, men, and times,
Aspens must shake their leaves and men n
hear
But need not listen, more than to my rhymes.

EDWARD THOMAS

Whatever wind blows, while they and I have
leaves

We cannot other than an aspen be
That ceaselessly, unreasonably grieves,
Or so men think who like a different tree.

THE BROOK

SEATED once by a brook, watching a child
Chiefly that paddled, I was thus beguiled.
Mellow the blackbird sang and sharp the thrush
Not far off in the oak and hazel brush,
Unseen. There was a scent like honeycomb
From mugwort dull. And down upon the dome
Of the stone the cart-horse kicks against so oft
A butterfly alighted. From aloft
He took the heat of the sun, and from below,
On the hot stone he perched contented so,
As if never a cart would pass again
That way ; as if I were the last of men
And he the first of insects to have earth
And sun together and to know their worth.
I was divided between him and the gleam,
The motion, and the voices, of the stream,
The waters running frizzled over gravel,
That never vanish and for ever travel.
A grey flycatcher silent on a fence
And I sat as if we had been there since
The horseman and the horse lying beneath
The fir-tree-covered barrow on the heath,

The horseman and the horse with silver shoes,
 Galloped the downs last. All that I could lose
 I lost. And then the child's voice raised the dead.
 "No one's been here before," was what she said
 And what I felt, yet never should have found
 A word for, while I gathered sight and sound.

THE BRIDGE

I HAVE come a long way to-day :
 On a strange bridge alone,
 Remembering friends, old friends,
 I rest, without smile or moan,
 As they remember me without smile or moan.

All are behind, the kind
 And the unkind too, no more
 To-night than a dream. The stream
 Runs softly yet drowns the Past,
 The dark-lit stream has drowned the Future and
 the Past.

No traveller has rest more blest
 Than this moment brief between
 Two lives, when the Night's first lights
 And shades hide what has never been,
 Things goodlier, lovelier, dearer, than will be or
 have been.

LIGHTS OUT

I HAVE come to the borders of sleep,
The unfathomable deep
Forest where all must lose
Their way, however straight,
Or winding, soon or late ;
They cannot choose.

Many a road and track
That, since the dawn's first crack,
Up to the forest brink,
Deceived the travellers
Suddenly now blurs,
And in they sink.

Here love ends,
Despair, ambition ends,
All pleasure and all trouble,
Although most sweet or bitter,
Here ends in sleep that is sweeter
Than tasks most noble.

There is not any book
Or face of dearest look
That I would not turn from now
To go into the unknown
I must enter and leave alone
I know not how.

EDWARD THOMAS

The tall forest towers ;
Its cloudy foliage lowers
Ahead, shelf above shelf ;
Its silence I hear and obey
That I may lose my way
And myself.

WORDS

OUT of us all
That make rhymes.
Will you choose
Sometimes—
As the winds use
A crack in the wall
Or a drain,
Their joy or their pain
To whistle through—
Choose me,
You English words ?

I know you :
You are light as dreams,
Tough as oak,
Precious as gold,
As poppies and corn,
Or an old cloak :
Sweet as our birds
To the ear

As the linnet note
 In the heat
 Of Midsummer :
 Strange as the races
 Of dead and unborn :
 Strange and sweet
 Equally.
 And familiar,
 To the eye,
 As the dearest faces
 That a man knows,
 And as lost homes are :
 But though older far
 Than oldest yew,—
 As our hills are, old,—
 Worn new
 Again and again :
 Young as our streams
 After rain :
 And as dear
 As the earth which you prove
 That we love.

Make me content
 With some sweetness
 From Wales
 Whose nightingales
 Have no wings,—
 From Wiltshire and Kent
 And Herefordshire,
 And the villages there,—
 From the names, and the things,

EDWARD THOMAS

No less.
Let me sometimes dance
With you,
Or climb
Or stand perchance
In ecstasy.
Fixed and free
In a rhyme,
As poets do.

TALL NETTLES

TALL nettles cover up, as they have done
These many springs, the rusty harrow, the plough
Long worn out, and the roller made of stone :
Only the elm butt tops the nettles now.

This corner of the farmyard I like most :
As well as any bloom upon a flower
I like the dust on the nettles, never lost
Except to prove the sweetness of a shower.

THE PATH

RUNNING along a bank, a parapet
That saves from the precipitous wood below
The level road, there is a path. It serves
Children for looking down the long smooth
steep,

EDWARD THOMAS

Between the legs of beech and yew, to where
A fallen tree checks the sight: while men and
 women
Content themselves with the road, and what they
 see

Over the bank, and what the children tell.
The path, winding like silver, trickles on,
Bordered and ever invaded by thinnest moss
That tries to cover roots and crumbling chalk
With gold, olive, and emerald, but in vain.
The children wear it. They have flattened the
 bank

On top, and silvered it between the moss
With the current of their feet, year after year.
But the road is houseless, and leads not to school.
To see a child is rare there, and the eye
Has but the road, the wood that overhangs
And underyawns it, and the path that looks
As if it led on to some legendary
Or fancied place where men have wished to go
And stay; till, sudden, it ends where the wood
 ends.

SWedes

THEY have taken the gable from the roof of clay
On the long swede pile. They have let in the sun
To the white and gold and purple of curled
 fronds

Unsunned. It is a sight more tender-gorgeous
At the wood-corner where Winter moans and drips

EDWARD THOMAS

Than when, in the Valley of the Tombs of Kings,
A boy crawls down into a Pharaoh's tomb
And, first of Christian men, beholds the mummy,
God and monkey, chariot and throne and vase,
Blue pottery, alabaster, and gold.

But dreamless long-dead Amen-hotep lies.
This is a dream of Winter, sweet as Spring.

W. J. TURNER

ROMANCE

WHEN I was but thirteen or so
I went into a golden land,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Took me by the hand.

My father died, my brother too,
They passed like fleeting dreams.
I stood where Popocatapetl
In the sunlight gleams.

I dimly heard the Master's voice
And boys far-off at play,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had stolen me away.

I walked in a great golden dream
To and fro from school—
Shining Popocatapetl
The dusty streets did rule.

I walked home with a gold dark boy
And never a word I'd say,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
Had taken my speech away :

W. J. TURNER

I gazed entranced upon his face
Fairer than any flower—
O shining Popocatapetl
It was thy magic hour :

The houses, people, traffic seemed
Thin fading dreams by day,
Chimborazo, Cotopaxi
They had stolen my soul away !

THE CAVES OF AUVERGNE

He carved the red deer and the bull
Upon the smooth cave rock,
Returned from war with belly full,
And scarred with many a knock,
He carved the red deer and the bull
Upon the smooth cave rock.

The stars flew by the cave's wide door,
The clouds wild trumpets blew,
Trees rose in wild dreams from the floor,
Flowers with dream faces grew
Up to the sky, and softly hung
Golden and white and blue.

The woman ground her heap of corn,
Her heart a guarded fire ;

W. J. T U R N E R

The wind played in his trembling soul
Like a hand upon a lyre,
The wind drew faintly on the stone
Symbols of his desire :

The red deer of the forest dark,
Whose antlers cut the sky,
That vanishes into the mirk
And like a dream flits by,
And by an arrow slain at last
Is but the wind's dark body.

The bull that stands in marshy lakes
As motionless and still
As a dark rock jutting from a plain
Without a tree or hill ;
The bull that is the sign of life,
Its sombre, phallic will.

And from the dead, white eyes of them
The wind springs up anew,
It blows upon the trembling heart,
And bull and deer renew
Their flitting life in the dim past
When that dead Hunter drew.

I sit beside him in the night,
And, fingering his red stone,
I chase through endless forests dark
Seeking that thing unknown,
That which is not red deer or bull,
But which by them was shown :

By those stiff shapes in which he drew
His soul's exalted cry,
When flying down the forest dark
He slew and knew not why,
When he was filled with song, and strength
Flowed to him from the sky.

The wind blows from red deer and bull,
The clouds wild trumpets blare.
Trees rise in wild dreams from the earth,
Flowers with dream faces stare,
*O Hunter, your own shadow stands
Within your forest lair !*

ECSTASY

I SAW a frieze on whitest marble drawn
Of boys who sought for shells along the shore,
Their white feet shedding pallor in the sea,
The shallow sea, the spring-time sea of green
That faintly creamed against the cold, smooth
pebbles.

The air was thin, their limbs were delicate,
The wind had graven their small eager hands
To feel the forests and the dark nights of Asia
Behind the purple bloom of the horizon,
Where sails would float and slowly melt away.

W. J. T U R N E R

Their naked, pure, and grave, unbroken silence
Filled the soft air as gleaming, limpid water
Fills a spring sky those days when rain is lying
In shattered bright pools on the wind-dried roads,
And their sweet bodies were wind-purified.

One held a shell unto his shell-like ear
And there was music carven in his face,
His eyes half-closed, his lips just breaking open
To catch the lulling, mazy, coralline roar
Of numberless caverns filled with singing seas.

And all of them were hearkening as to singing
Of far off voices thin and delicate,
Voices too fine for any mortal mind
To blow into the whorls of mortal ears—
And yet those sounds flowed from their grave,
sweet faces.

And as I looked I heard that delicate music,
And I became as grave, as calm, as still
As those carved boys. I stood upon that shore,
I felt the cool sea dream around my feet,
My eyes were staring at the far horizon :

And the wind came and purified my limbs,
And the stars came and set within my eyes,
And snowy clouds rested upon my shoulders,
And the blue sky shimmered deep within me,
And I sang like a carven pipe of music.

KENT IN WAR

THE pebbly brook is cold to-night,
Its water soft as air,
A clear, cold, crystal-bodied wind
Shadowless and bare,
Leaping and running in this world
Where dark-horned cattle stare :

Where dark-horned cattle stare, hoof-firm
On the dark pavements of the sky,
And trees are mummies swathed in sleep,
And small dark hills crowd wearily :
Soft multitudes of snow-grey clouds
Without a sound march by.

Down at the bottom of the road
I smell the woody damp
Of that cold spirit in the grass,
And leave my hill-top camp—
Its long gun pointing in the sky—
And take the Moon for lamp.

I stop beside the bright cold glint
Of that thin spirit of the grass,
So gay it is, so innocent !
I watch its sparkling footsteps pass
Lightly from smooth round stone to stone,
Hid in the dew-hung grass.

W. J. TURNER

My lamp shines in the globes of dew,
And leaps into that crystal wind
Running along the shaken grass
To each dark hole that it can find—
The crystal wind, the Moon my lamp,
Have vanished in a wood that's blind.

High lies my small, my shadowy camp,
Crowded about by small dark hills ;
With sudden small white flowers the sky
Above the woods' dark greenness fills ;
And hosts of dark-browed, muttering trees
In trance the white Moon stills.

I move among their tall grey forms,
A thin moon-glimmering, wandering Ghost,
Who takes his lantern through the world
In search of life that he has lost,
While watching by that long lean gun
Upon his small hill post.

DEATH

WHEN I am dead a few poor souls shall grieve
As I grieved for my brother long ago.
Scarce did my eyes grow dim,
I had forgotten him ;
I was far-off hearing the spring winds blow,
And many summers burned

When, though still reeling with my eyes aflame,
I heard that faded name
Whispered one Spring amid the hurrying world
From which, years gone, he turned.

I looked up at my windows and I saw
The trees, thin spectres sucked forth by the moon,
The air was very still
Above a distant hill ;
It was the hour of night's full silver moon.
“ O art thou there my brother ? ” my soul
cried ;
And all the pale stars down bright rivers wept,
As my heart sadly crept
About the empty hills, bathed in that light
That lapped him when he died.

Ah ! it was cold, so cold ; do I not know
How dead my heart on that remembered day !
Clear in a far-away place
I see his delicate face
Just as he called me from my solitary play,
Giving into my hands a tiny tree.
We planted it in the dark, blossomless ground
Gravely, without a sound ;
Then back I went and left him standing by
His birthday gift to me.

In that far land perchance it quietly grows
Drinking the rain, making a pleasant shade ;
Birds in its branches fly
Out of the fathomless sky

W. J. TURNER

Where worlds of circling light arise and fade,
Blindly it quivers in the bright flood of day,
Or drowned in multitudinous shouts of rain
Glooms o'er the dark-veiled plain—
Buried below, the ghost that's in his bones
Dreams in the sodden clay.

And, while he faded, drunk with beauty's eyes
I kissed bright girls and laughed deep in dumb
trees,

That stared fixt in the air
Like madmen in despair
Gaped up from earth with the escaping breeze.
I saw earth's exaltation slowly creep
Out of their myriad sky-embracing veins.

I laughed along the lanes,
Meeting Death riding in from the hollow seas
Through black-wreathed woods asleep.

I laughed, I swaggered on the cold, hard ground
Through the grey air trembled a falling wave—
“Thou'rt pale, O Death ! ” I cried,

Mocking him in my pride ;
And passing I dreamed not of that lonely grave,
But of leaf-maidens whose pale, moon-like
hands

Above the tree-foam waved in the icy air,
Sweeping with shining hair
Through the green-tinted sky, one moment
fled
Out of immortal lands.

W. J. TURNER

One windless Autumn night the Moon came
out

In a white sea of cloud, a field of snow ;

In darkness shaped of trees,

I sank upon my knees

And watched her shining, from the small wood
below—

Faintly Death flickered in an owl's far cry—
We floated soundless in the great gulf of space,

Her light upon my face—

Immortal, shining in that dark wood I knelt
And knew I could not die.

And knew I could not die—O Death didn't thou
Heed my vain glory, standing pale by thy dead ?

There is a spirit who grieves

Amid earth's dying leaves ;

Was't thou that wept beside my brother's bed ?

For I did never mourn nor heed at all

Him passing on his temporal elm-wood bier,

I never shed a tear.

The drooping sky spread grey-winged through my
soul,

While stones and earth did fall.

That sound rings down the years—I hear it yet—
All earthly life's a winding funeral—

And though I never wept,

But into the dark coach stept,

Dreaming by night to answer the blood's sweet
call,

W. J. TURNER

She who stood there, high breasted, with small
wise lips,
And gave me wine to drink and bread to eat,
Has not more steadfast feet,
But fades from my arms as fade from mariners'
eyes
The sea's most beauteous ships.

The trees and hills of earth were once as close
As my own brother, they are becoming dreams
And shadows in my eyes ;
More dimly lies
Guaya deep in my soul, the coastline gleams
Faintly along the darkening crystalline seas.
Glimmering and lovely still, 'twill one day go ;
The surging dark will flow
Over my hopes and joys, and blot out all
Earth's hills and skies and trees.

I shall look up one night and see the Moon
For the last time shining above the hills,
And thou, silent, wilt ride
Over the dark hillside.
'Twill be, perchance, the time of daffodils—
“How come those bright immortals in the
woods?
Their joy being young, did'st thou not drag them
all
Into dark graves ere Fall? ”
Shall life thus haunt me, wondering, as I go
To thy deep solitudes?

W. J. TURNER

There is a figure with a down-turned torch
Carved on a pillar in an olden time,
A calm and lovely boy
Who comes not to destroy
But to lead age back to its golden prime.
Thus did an antique sculptor draw thee, Death,
With smooth and beauteous brow and faint sweet
smile,
Nor haggard, gaunt and vile,
And thou perhaps art Him to whom men may
Unvexed, give up their breath.

But in my soul thou sittest like a dream
Among earth's mountains, by her dim-coloured
seas ;
A wild unearthly Shape
In thy dark-glimmering cape,
Piping a tune of wavering melodies,
Thou sittest, ay, thou sittest at the feast
Of my brief life among earth's bright-wreathed
flowers,
Stemming the dancing hours
With sombre gleams until abrupt, thou risest
And all, at once, is ceased.

SOLDIERS IN A SMALL CAMP

THERE is a camp upon a rounded hill
Where men do sleep more closely to the stars,
And tree-like shapes stand at its entrances,
Beside the small, dark, shadow-soldiery.

W. J. T U R N E R

Deep in the gloom of days of isolation,
Withdrawn, high up from the low, murmuring
town,

Those shadows sit, drooping around their fires,
Or move as winds dark-waving in a wood.

Staring at cattle on a neighbouring hill
They are oblivious as is stone or grass—
The clouds passed voiceless over, and the sun
Rose, and lit trees, and vanished utterly.

Then in the awful beauty of the world,
When stars are singing in dark ecstasy,
Those ox-like soldiers sit collected round
A thin, metallic echo of human song :

And click their feet and clap their hands in time,
And wag their heads, and make the white ghost
owl
Flit from its branch—but still those tree-like
shapes
Stand like archangels dark-winged in the sky.

And presently the soldiers cease to stir ;
The thin voice sinks and all at once is dead ;
They lie down on their planks and hear the wind.
And feel the darkness fumbling at their souls.

They lie in rows as stiff as tombs or trees,
Their eyeballs imageless, like marble still ;
And secretly they feel that roof and walls
Are gone and that they stare into the sky.

It is so black, so black, so black, so black,
Those black-winged shapes have stretched across
the world,
Have swallowed up the stars, and if the sun
Rises again, it will be black, black, black.

A RITUAL DANCE

I—THE DANCE

In the black glitter of night the grey vapour
forest
Lies a dark Ghost in the water, motionless,
dark,
Like a corpse by the bank fallen, and hopelessly
rotting
Where the thin silver soul of the stars silently
dances.

The flowers are closed, the birds are carved on
the trees,
When out of the forest glide hundreds of spear-
holding shadows,
In smooth dark ivory bodies their eyeballs
gleaming
Forming a gesturing circle beneath the Moon.
The bright-eyed shadows, the tribe in ritual
gathered,

W. J. T U R N E R

Are dancing and howling, the embryo soul of a nation :

In loud drum-beating monotonous the tightly stretched skins
Of oxen that stared at the stars are singing wild pæans :

Wild pæans for food that magically grew in the clearings

When he that was slain was buried and is resurrected,

And a green mist arose from the mud and shone in the Moon,

A great delirium of faces, a new generation.

The thin wafer Moon it is there, it is there in the sky,

The hand-linked circle raise faces of mad exaltation—

Dance, O you Hunters, leap madly upon the flung shields,

Shoot arrows into the sky, thin moon-seeking needles :

Now you shall have a harvest, a belly-full rapture,

There shall be many fat women, full grown, and smoother than honey,

Their limbs like ivory rounded, and firm as a berry,

Their lips full of food and their eyes full of hunger for men !

The heat of the earth arises, a faint love mist
 Wan with over-desiring, and in the marshes
 Blinely the mud stirs, clouding the dark shining
 water,
 And troubling the still soft swarms of fallen
 stars.

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There is bright sweat upon the bodies of cattle,
 Great vials of life motionless in the moonlight,
 Breathing faint mists over the warm, damp
 ground ;
 And the cry of a dancer rings through the
 shadowy forest.

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The tiger is seeking his mate and his glassy eyes
 Are purple and shot with starlight in the grass
 shining,
 The fiery grass tortured out of the mud and
 writhing
 Under the sun, now shivering and pale in the
 Moon.

I
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The shadows are dancing, dancing, dancing,
 dancing :
 The grey vapour arms of the forest lie dreaming
 around them ;
 The cold, shining moonlight falls from their
 bodies and faces,
 But caught in their eyes lies prisoned and
 faintly gleaming :

And they return to their dwellings within the grey
forest,
Into their dark huts, burying the moonlight with
them,
Burying the trees and the stars and the flowing
river,
And the glittering spears, and their dark,
evocative gestures.

II—SLEEP

Hollow the world in the moonlit hour when the
birds are shadows small,
Lost in the swarm of giant leaves and myriad
branches tall ;
When vast thick boughs hang across the sky like
solid limbs of night,
Dug from still quarries of grey-black air by the
pale transparent light.
And the purple and golden blooms of the sun,
each crimson and spotted flower,
Are folded up or have faded away, as the still
intangible power
Floats out of the sky, falls shimmering down, a
silver-shadowy bloom,
On the spear-pointed forest a fragile crown, in
the soul a soft, bright gloom ;
Hollow the world when the shadow of man lies
prone and still on its floor,
And the moonlight shut from his empty heart
weeps softly against his door,

W. J. TURNER

And his terror and joy but a little dream in the
corner of his house,
And his voice dead in the darkness 'mid the
twittering of a mouse.

III

Hollow the world ! hollow the world !
 And its dancers shadow-grey ;
And the Moon a silver-shadowy bloom
 Fading and fading away ;
And the forest's grey vapour, and all the trees
 Shadows against the sky ;
And the soul of man and his ecstasies
 A night-forgotten cry.
Hollow the world ! hollow the world !

I OLO ANEURIN WILLIAMS

FROM A FLEMISH GRAVEYARD

JANUARY 1915

A YEAR hence may the grass that waves
O'er English men in Flemish graves,
Coating this clay with green of peace
And softness of a year's increase,
Be kind and lithe as English grass
To bend and nod as the winds pass ;
It was for grass on English hills
These bore too soon the last of ills.

And may the wind be brisk and clean,
And singing cheerfully between
The bents a pleasant-burdened song
To cheer these English dead along ;
For English songs and English winds
Are they that bred these English minds.

And may the circumstantial trees
Dip, for these dead ones, in the breeze,
And make for them their silver play
Of spangled boughs each shiny day.
Thus may these look above, and see
And hear the wind in grass and tree,
And watch a lark in heaven stand,
And think themselves in their own land.

I O L O A N E U R I N W I L L I A M S

A MONUMENT

(AFTER AN ANCIENT FASHION)

TRAVELLER, turn a mournful eye
Where my lady's ashes lie ;
If thou hast a sweet thine own
Pity me, that am alone ;—
Yet, if thou no lover be,
Nor hast been, I'll pity thee.

F R A N C I S B R E T T Y O U N G

SONG OF THE DARK AGES

We digged our trenches on the down
Beside old barrows, and the wet
White chalk we shovelled from below ;
It lay like drifts of thawing snow
On parados and parapet :

Until a pick neither struck flint
Nor split the yielding chalky soil,
But only calcined human bone :
Poor relic of that Age of Stone
Whose ossuary was our spoil.

Home we marched singing in the rain,
And all the while, beneath our song,
I mused how many springs should wane
And still our trenches scar the plain :
The monument of an old wrong.

But then, I thought, the fair green sod
Will wholly cover that white stain,
And soften, as it clothes the face
Of those old barrows, every trace
Of violence to the patient plain.

F R A N C I S B R E T T Y O U N G

And careless people, passing by
Will speak of both in casual tone :
Saying : " You see the toil they made :
The age of iron, pick and spade,
Here jostles with the Age of Stone."

Yet either from that happier race
Will merit but a passing glance ;
And they will leave us both alone :
Poor savages who wrought in stone—
Poor savages who fought in France.

BÊTE HUMAINE

RIDING through Ruwu swamp, about sunrise,
I saw the world awake ; and as the ray
Touched the tall grasses where they sleeping lay,
Lo, the bright air alive with dragonflies :
With brittle wings aquiver, and great eyes
Piloting crimson bodies, slender and gay.
I aimed at one, and struck it, and it lay
Broken and lifeless, with fast-fading dyes . . .
Then my soul sickened with a sudden pain
And horror, at my own careless cruelty,
That in an idle moment I had slain
A creature whose sweet life it is to fly :
Like beast that prey with tooth and claw . . .
Nay, they
Must slay to live, but what excuse had I ?

THE GIFT

MARCHING on Tanga, marching the parch'd plain
 Of wavering spear-grass past Pangani river,
 England came to me—me who had always ta'en
 But never given before—England, the giver,
 In a vision of three poplar-trees that shiver
 On still evenings of summer, after rain,
 By Slapton Ley, where reed-beds start and quiver
 When scarce a ripple moves the upland grain.
 Then I thanked God that now I had suffered pain
 And, as the parch'd plain, thirst, and lain awake
 Shivering all night through till cold daybreak :
 In that I count these sufferings my gain
 And her acknowledgment. Nay, more, would
 fain
 Suffer as many more for her sweet sake.

THE LEANING ELM

BEFORE my window, in days of winter hoar
 Huddled a mournful wood ;
 Smooth pillars of beech, domed chestnut, syca-
 more,
 In stony sleep they stood :
 But you, unhappy elm, the angry west
 Had chosen from the rest,
 Flung broken on your brothers' branches bare
 And left you leaning there

F R A N C I S B R E T T Y O U N G

So dead that when the breath of winter cast
Wild snow upon the blast,
The other living branches, downward bowed.
Shook free their crystal shroud
And shed upon your blackened trunk beneath
Their livery of death. . . .

On windless nights between the beechen bars
I watched cold stars
Throb whitely in the sky, and dreamily
Wondered if any life lay locked in thee :
If still the hidden sap secretly moved
As water in the icy winterbourne
Floweth unheard :
And half I pitied you your trance forlorn :
You could not hear, I thought, the voice of any
bird,
The shadowy cries of bats in dim twilight
Or cool voices of owls crying by night . . .
Hunting by night under the hornèd moon :
Yet half I envied you your wintry swoon,
Till, on this morning mild, the sun, new-risen
Steals from his misty prison ;
The frozen fallows glow, the black trees shaken
In a clear flood of sunlight vibrating awaken :
And lo, your ravaged bole, beyond belief
Slenderly fledged anew with tender leaf
As pale as those twin vanes that break at last
In a tiny fan above the black beech-mast
Where no blade springeth green
But pallid bells of the shy helleborine.
What is this ecstasy that overwhelms

F R A N C I S B R E T T Y O U N G

The dreaming earth? See, the embrownèd elms
Crowding purple distances warm the depths of
the wood:

A new-born wind tosses their tassels brown,
His white clouds dapple the down:
Into a green flame bursting the hedgerows stand.
Soon, with banners flying, Spring will walk the
land. . . .

There is no day for thee, my soul, like this,
No spring of lovely words. Nay, even the kiss
Of mortal love that maketh man divine
This light cannot outshine:

Nay, even poets, they whose frail hands catch
The shadow of vanishing beauty, may not match
This leafy ecstasy. Sweet words may cull
Such magical beauty as time may not destroy;
But we, alas, are not more beautiful:
We cannot flower in beauty as in joy.
We sing, our musèd words are sped, and then
Poets are only men
Who age, and toil, and sicken. . . . This maim'd tree
May stand in leaf when I have ceased to be.

PROTHALAMION

WHEN the evening came my love said to me:
Let us go into the garden now that the sky is
cool;

The garden of black hellebore and rosemary
Where wild woodruff spills in a milky pool.

F R A N C I S B R E T T Y O U N G

Low we passed in the twilight, for the wavering heat
 Of day had waned ; and round that shaded plot
Of secret beauty the thickets clustered sweet :
 Here is heaven, our hearts whispered, but our
 lips spake not.

Between that old garden and seas of lazy foam
 Gloomy and beautiful alleys of trees arise
With spire of cypress and dreamy beechen dome,
 So dark that our enchanted sight knew nothing
 but the skies :

Veiled with a soft air, drench'd in the roses' musk
 Or the dusky, dark carnation's breath of clove :
No stars burned in their deeps, but through the
 dusk
I saw my love's eyes, and they were brimmed
 with love.

No star their secret ravished, no wasting moon
 Mocked the sad transience of those eternal
 hours :
Only the soft unseeing heaven of June,
 The ghosts of great trees, and the sleeping
 flowers.

For doves that crooned in the leafy noonday now
 Were silent ; the night-jar sought his secret
 covers,
Nor even a mild sea-whisper moved a creaking
 bough—
Was ever a silence deeper made for lovers ?

F R A N C I S B R E T T Y O U N G

Was ever a moment meeter made for love ?
Beautiful are your close lips beneath my kiss :
And all your yielding sweetness beautiful—
Oh, never in all the world was such a night as
this !

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